



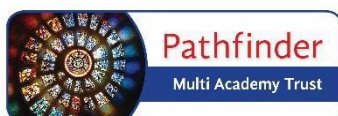
**Hempland**  
Primary School

# EARLY YEARS POLICY

Approval Date: September 2023

Review Date: September 2024

Member of staff responsible: Rob Stevens



## Statement of intent

At Hempland Primary School, we greatly value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners, parents, carers and settings.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

## EYFS Vision

- Children feel happy, safe and secure in their environment.
- The Early Years environment provides a wide variety of age appropriate resources, with continuous provision (those resources which are always available) and enhancements (resources which are added to those already in place) as part of planned topics as well as those based on the children's own interests and experiences.
- At Hempland Primary School, we are lucky to have lots of outdoor space which the children can utilise daily. Learning outside the classroom supports the development of gross motor skills, healthy and active lifestyles by offering children opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement, and promoting a sense of well-being. Our outdoor area is resourced to support learning, develop problem-solving skills and nurture creativity, as well as providing opportunities for developing imagination, inventiveness, resourcefulness and team work. We also have a dedicated Forest Schools area where the children will have lots of opportunity to explore the outdoor world through our weekly Forest Schools sessions. It is a great environment to learn about nature, seasonal changes and develop a love for outdoor learning.
- Children are able to access resources independently and use them how they choose, for their own purposes to develop their own learning and understanding of the world around them. These choices may differ from the planned intentions but will still be meaningful and support learning.
- All adults will support, scaffold and model learning in the indoor and outdoor areas through:
  - Specific teaching, e.g. phonics, guided work.
  - Supporting children through child initiated projects e.g. building a ship that won't fall apart, how to write an invitation for a birthday party.
  - Adult initiated activities in the learning bays, e.g. how to use enhancements such as sponge printing.
- All adults continually observe and assess children's learning and development and use this information in discussion with other members of the team to plan relevant, engaging and challenging activities which meet each child's individual needs.
- The Early Years prime and specific areas of learning are delivered through an exciting, engaging and challenging curriculum. It gives children opportunities to access a wide range of experiences, to consolidate skills and develop a deep understanding of the world around them. This supports progress towards a good level of development.
- All adults who work in the Early Years have a duty to be:
  - Facilitators – to support learning in all areas
  - Observers – to check on children's learning and progress in order to plan next steps
  - Challengers – to enable children to meet their full potential
- As the people who know their children best, parents and carers are partners in the learning and development process. This is supported and promoted by the use of Tapestry where the parents and carers see and can add to their child's learning journey.

## **1. Legal framework**

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Childcare Act 2006
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Data Protection Act 2018

1.2. This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2021) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (2015) 'The prevent duty'

1.3. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equality, Diversion and Inclusion Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Information Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

2.1. The local governing committee has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place to safeguard children that includes an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child, the use of mobile phones and cameras, and staff safeguarding training requirements. These issues are addressed in part in this policy and in further detail in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

2.2. The local governing committee has the overall responsibility for ensuring there is a policy in place in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. These issues are addressed in the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

2.3. The local governing committee has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

2.4. The local governing committee has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

2.5. The local governing committee has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

2.6. The EYFS lead, in conjunction with the Headteacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.

2.7. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.

2.8. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

## **3. Aims**

3.1. Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Give each child a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.
- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents and carers to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

#### **4. Four guiding principles shape our practice:**

- Every child is unique, is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between the school and parents.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

##### **4.1. To put these principles into practice, the school:**

- Provides a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Works in partnership with parents and carers.
- Works in partnership with Pathfinder MAT and its Early Years Staff
- Plans challenging learning experiences based on individual needs, informed by observation and assessment.
- All staff get to know all children.
- Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

#### **5. Learning and development**

5.1. The EYFS curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development.

5.2. In partnership with parents and carers, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

5.3. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings.

5.4. The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

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

5.5. The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:

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

5.6. Activities are planned to reflect children's interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.

5.7. The class teacher will discuss any cause for concern in a child's progress, especially in the prime areas of learning, with the child's parents/carers. A strategy of support will be agreed upon and consideration will be taken as to whether the child may have a special educational need or disability which requires additional support.

- 5.8. The school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children with EAL to use their home language in play and learning whilst also ensuring that these children have sufficient opportunities to reach a good standard of English. During assessment, if a child is found to not have a strong grasp on English, the class teacher will contact the child's parents/carers to establish their home language skills to assess if there is cause for concern about a language delay.
- 5.9. Each area of learning and development will be implemented through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.
- 5.10. The school will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interaction.
- 5.11. Activities are planned with regard to three Characteristics of Effective Learning in the EYFS:
- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things.
  - Active Learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
  - Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

## **6. Inclusion**

- 6.1. All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 6.2. The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace.
- 6.3. The Equal Opportunities Policy ensures that the needs of all children are met, regardless of any protected characteristics they have.
- 6.4. The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy ensures all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible.
- 6.5. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the school's SENDCo.

## **7. The learning environment and outdoor spaces**

- 7.1. The environment is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc. Each classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.
- 7.2. Children have access to an outdoor play area and daily outdoor activities are planned for and the children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. The outdoor area is open each day unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.

## **8. Assessment**

- 8.1. Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support. Moderation across the MAT is attended to ensure accuracy and consistency.
- 8.2. Parents and carers will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the class teacher will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents/carers.

8.3. Formative assessments are used to assess the learning and development of children in the EYFS. Staff members will observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This information will then be used to shape learning experiences for each child.

8.4. Reasonable adjustments will be made to the assessment process for children with SEND as appropriate.

## **9. Safeguarding and welfare**

9.1. All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well.

9.2. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

9.3. The DSL is Abbie Innes. The deputy DSLs are Harriet Hutchinson, Helen Andrews and Rob Stevens.

9.4. Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect

## **10. Mobile phones and devices**

10.1. Policies and procedures for use of mobile devices are addressed in full in our staff handbook.

10.2. Staff are provided with a school device to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos.

10.3. School devices must only be used for work related matters.

10.4. Staff must not take photographs of bruising or injuries for child protection reasons. Instead, recording concerns forms and body maps are used on CPOMS.

10.5. School devices must not be taken off site without prior permission from the headteacher.

10.6. Where staff members have concerns over material on a school device, they must report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **11. Health and safety**

11.1. A first-aid kit is located in the Reception cloakroom and outdoor area.

11.2. Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered as outlined in the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

11.3. The class teacher or teaching assistant will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents.

11.4. Accidents and injuries will be recorded on an accident form, located in the folder in the classroom.

11.5. The headteacher will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.

11.6. The school has Emergency Plans in place which includes Evacuation and Lockdown procedures.

11.7. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has will be recorded, shared with all relevant staff and caterers. This will be retained on the child's school records and reviewed annually.

11.8. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

11.9. The Health and Safety Policy outlines the full health and safety policies and procedures.

## **12. Staffing**

12.1. A robust recruitment process is in place, which aims to ensure that staff employed in the EYFS are suitable.

12.2. Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

12.3. Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.

12.4. All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the EYFS lead. The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:

- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
- Identify solutions to address issues.
- Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.

12.5. There will be at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate.

## **13. Information and records**

13.1. Information is stored in line with the GDPR legislation and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to the Data Protection Policy.

## **14. Parental involvement**

14.1. Parents and carers are invited to termly parents' evenings in autumn and spring term; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents are welcome to talk to teachers regularly.

14.2. Parents and carers are actively encouraged to share children's learning and development at home through the use of an online learning journey (Tapestry).

## **15. Transition periods**

The following process is in place to ensure children's successful transition to reception:

- Invitation to initial meeting in May/June following allocation of places
- 1:1 meetings with class teachers for parents/carers as required
- 2 taster sessions for the children to spend time in the classroom
- EYFS Teacher phone call or visit to nursery and pre-school settings for handover of information

## **16. Monitoring and review**

16.1. This policy is reviewed annually by the local governing committee and the headteacher.

16.2. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

16.3. All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.

16.4. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2024.