



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

At Ashbourne Hilltop, we aim to give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for excellent future progress through school life. To ensure this, learning and development opportunities are planned around the needs of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly. Adults respond to each child's needs and interests, guiding development through warm, positive interactions in stimulating well-resourced indoor and outdoor environments.

In the EYFS it is the adult's role to teach, support, stimulate and extend children's learning through initiating and extending experiences and interacting skilfully and sensitively with children to scaffold, support and enhance learning.

We have developed a specific Early Years curriculum which combines the development of personal, social and emotional skills, opportunities for child-initiated learning and a broad curriculum including all areas of learning.

Aim

We aim to meet each child's needs by: -

- Caring for the whole child, their health, both physical and mental, their feelings, thinking and spiritual development.
- Ensuring each child has the opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to achieve success and to build a thirst for lifelong learning.
- Teaching the foundation of reading, writing and maths that will develop the basic skills and also enable access to the wider curriculum.
- Providing a stimulating environment, indoors and out, providing many opportunities for children to be curious, ask questions and to be eager to discover and learn.
- Providing opportunities and time for children to pursue their own interests and time to interact and share with others.
- Providing opportunities for each child to make choices and decisions to develop their independence.
- Providing multi-cultural experiences including resources and stories which reflect different cultures and values.

What children learn

Curriculum content is planned in seven areas of learning and development.

Three Prime areas:-

Communication and Language - children develop skills and confidence in speaking and listening in a range of situations.

Physical Development - children develop their fine and gross motor co-ordination, control and movement through being active

Personal, Social and Emotional Development - within clear boundaries children form positive relationships, develop social skills and respect for others and understand appropriate behaviour.

Four Specific Areas

Literacy - through the daily phonics lessons, adult led literacy activities and individual and guided reading. As well as continuous provision in the form of the book area, fine motor area developing handwriting, a writing area and opportunities for writing in all areas of learning.

Maths - through adult led maths activities, a dedicated maths area and in continuous provision linked to maths ie. measuring in the sand etc.

Understanding the World - finding out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design - exploring the wide range of media and sharing their thoughts, ideas feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

The children's topics are based on the Cornerstone curriculum themes, which enables exciting, challenging and real learning for our young children.

How Children Learn

Children learn through:-

- Playing and exploring
- Learning actively
- Creating and thinking critically

Teachers make professional judgements about the balance between activities led or guided by adults and those led by children. This balance shifts towards more activities led by adults as children move towards Year 1.

The children spend much of their day in the continuous provision where they can select apparatus and equipment for active learning. During the day, we include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and it is often through children's play that we see how much learning the children

have understood and taken on. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered together on the carpet as a class.

Environments

Children have daily access to well-planned stimulating learning environments, indoors and outdoors. These environments give children opportunities to be active and physical and also quiet and reflective.

Specific areas include:

Block play

Creative area

Malleable area

Small world

Finger gym

Role play

Sand/water

Book area

Numeracy area

Writing /mark making area

Science/investigation area.

It is important that there are learning opportunities both inside and outside for the acquisition of gross motor skills, taking risks, fostering love of nature and the environment and large play which is not always possible indoors.

Progress and Attainment

On entry to Nursery and Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. The Teacher submits end of half term assessment on Primary insight which shows each child's development across the areas of learning. This data is then used to discuss progress and plan any additional interventions which may be required during Pupil Progress Meetings with the HT. At the end of Reception, the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report. Each child has a learning journey containing work, observations and photos across the areas of learning.

Partnership with parents and carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in their child's learning at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. We keep parents informed through our class Do Jo page. Each week we post an outline of learning and photographs of the children involved in the activities.

Parents are invited to attend a Parents' Meeting each term and staff are available in the mornings and evenings to talk and to discuss more urgent matters.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have a positive relationship with the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2014) and the schools safeguarding procedures. We are a healthy school and the children receive fresh fruit daily and are able to drink water whenever they wish. Reception children are eligible for a free school lunch or may bring a healthy packed lunch. We teach the children the importance of healthy eating, exercise and the importance of hygiene through hand washing etc.

Monitoring and Review

The Head Teacher and EYFS Leader are responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the Early Years provision and learning. This information is used to inform teaching and learning, staff training and development and the School Improvement Plan.

S Smith (EYFS Lead) 2023