



Early Years' Foundation Stage Policy

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Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Harrington Hill, we offer provision for 3 to 5 year olds in our Nursery and Reception classes. In partnership with families, we support every child in making a positive start to their educational journey. We provide quality teaching and learning opportunities and environments that nourish each child's unique abilities and interests as they learn and grow.

This policy has been informed by the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2021). The policy is divided into four sections:

- Key Principles of the EYFS
- Observation and Assessment
- Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements
- Transition to KS1

Section 1: Key Principles of the EYFS

The EYFS is based upon four principles, as detailed in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (DfE, 2021):

- Every child is a **unique child**, who 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 with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time
- Children **develop and learn at different rates**

A Unique Child

At Harrington Hill, we recognise that each child is a competent learner with the ability to make valuable contributions to the classroom. We support children to develop a positive sense of their own culture and identity. We value and respect all children and families equally. Harrington Hill understands that children learn and develop in different ways at different rates. Practitioners observe and understand each child's development and learning, assess progress, plan for and act upon identified next steps.

Positive Relationships

Practitioners at Harrington Hill understand that positive relationships foster a sense of belonging to the school community, which benefits wellbeing and supports teaching and learning. Teaching staff respond to children's individual needs, feelings and interests with sensitivity. We are supportive of children's efforts and independence and use praise, encouragement, celebration and reward to help children develop a positive attitude towards learning. Staff are consistent in setting clear boundaries and expectations towards a classroom culture that helps all children to feel safe, calm and ready to learn.

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value their continued contributions. Parents are encouraged to develop a partnership with Harrington Hill in the following ways:

- Before starting school, families are visited at home and children have the opportunity to attend transition sessions in school
- Parents and carers are invited to a key information sharing meeting in the half-term before their child starts school
- Workshops are held throughout the year to support parents and carers to effectively help their child in their learning
- Parents and carers are invited into school for celebratory events and assemblies
- Parents and carers are invited to join their children for trips and events outside of school
- Children's school experiences are shared with parents and carers via the Tapestry app
- Teachers speak warmly to parents and carers and encourage an 'open door' approach to communication and questions

Enabling Environments

Harrington Hill EYFS offers stimulating spaces and resources, both inside and outside. Resources are diligently maintained and organised. As well as two classrooms for Nursery and Reception, The Early Years benefits from a third "Shared Space" classroom, which is used as a sensory space and for breakout interventions. Children in the EYFS access twice weekly Forest School sessions all year round, which offers children opportunities for supported risk taking and physical and emotional exploration in nature.

Throughout the day, children have opportunities to access whole class activities, adult-led small group learning, independent directed activities and self-selected play and learning. Learning in the EYFS is largely play based, rooted in stimulating, physical resources that children can manipulate and experience first-hand. Provision is carefully planned to stimulate and engage children's interests, and offer children opportunities for both success and challenge. Both the indoor and outdoor environments reflect the breadth of the curriculum.

Learning and Development

Harrington Hill designs the EYFS curriculum in line with the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (DfE, 2021) and the non-statutory guidance, the Development Matters framework (DfE, 2021).

The seven areas of the EYFS curriculum are organised into two categories: prime and specific.

Prime Areas:

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

The prime areas are universal, fundamental aspects of child development. All three prime areas are always in action; it is through the prime areas that children access the world around them and relationships with people – which in turn unlocks the specific areas. Harrington Hill understands that children's brains develop fast in the first five years than at any other time of life. The prime areas remain centrally relevant throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, but developmental steps missed in the

early years become progressively more difficult to address – this understanding is reflected in EYFS provision at Harrington Hill.

Specific Areas:

- Maths
- Literacy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The specific areas represent shared cultural skills and knowledge, which children engage with as members of the society in which they live. The specific areas are not time-sensitive to in terms of the brain's biological responsiveness to experiences. Aspects of these areas will arise for children naturally as they make sense of the experiences of daily life. Other aspects are taught explicitly through planned activities as part of the EYFS curriculum offer.

At Harrington Hill, the EYFS curriculum has been specifically designed to equip children with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding they need to sufficiently prepare them for KS1 and beyond. Staff training ensures that all teaching staff in all year groups have a clear understanding of how learning accumulates and progresses from Nursery through to Year 6.

At Harrington Hill, we support children in developing the three Characteristics of Effective Learning as detailed in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (DfE, 2021).

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
- **Creating and Thinking Critically:** children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Section 2: Observation and Assessment

Rationale

Harrington Hill understands that the cycle of effective observation, assessment, planning and provision begins with building strong and secure relationships with children. A holistic view of the child - including their individual skills, knowledge, understanding, interests, triggers and motivations - enables practitioners to tailor teaching and learning to successfully move children forward in their learning journey. We appreciate that children's progress is not always linear, but rather like a spider's web in its nature.

Assessment plays an important role in effective approaches to supporting children. Harrington Hill understands assessment to be the process of knowing about an individual child's skills, knowledge and understanding through collecting and using information about what they can do. Effective assessment highlights gaps in children's understanding and calls attention to the children who needs the most support. This enables practitioners to offer timely and appropriate intervention in order to narrow learning gaps. Assessment is also used to inform a rich and meaningful curriculum for all children.

Formative Assessment

Ongoing formative assessment is central to good Early Years practice. It involves practitioners observing and interacting with children in their play and learning. Observation is the practice of watching and listening to children to find out how they are developing, what they are learning through their play and how they interact with others. Reflections and professional conversations around what has been observed contributes to practitioner knowledge of a child.

Tapestry

At Harrington Hill, observations of children's experiences and learning are recorded through the Tapestry app. An important function of this is to develop parental engagement with children's learning in school. Parents can like and comment on school observations and are able to upload their own observations of children's experiences and play at home and in the community. Throughout Nursery and Reception, each child builds an individual journal, documenting their developmental journey through the Early Years. Observations are routinely shared with children, to help them reflect on and celebrate their own learning.

Each child has four individual written observations made per half term. The four observations are in each of the specific areas of learning: Maths, Literacy, Understanding the World and Expressive Art and Design. Each specific observation is then linked to the relevant prime area/s: Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Communication and Language. Observations are written by Early Years practitioners (both teachers and support staff) and make clear curriculum links to the Early Years framework, Development Matters. Alongside individual observations, whole class observations of special moments in school are published approximately once per class per week.

Summative Assessment

Harrington Hill EYFS recognises that, alongside day-to-day interactions with children, reliable summative assessment helps practitioners to gain a clear understanding of what children can and cannot yet do, and if they have achieved intended learning outcomes.

Children are assessed in phonics every half-term. This information is used to group the children, meaning children access appropriate teaching and learning that is targeted to their current attainment in reading.

In the first term of Reception, children undertake a short tablet-based assessment, produced by Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI). This assessment informs practitioners' understanding of children's attainment and abilities in communication and language. If appropriate, targeted children then undertake the NELI programme, a 20-week group intervention designed to improve children's language and early literacy skills.

Nursery and Reception teachers also complete a termly assessment on Tapestry for each child, logging if there are 'concerns' or 'no concerns' about the child's development in each of the seven areas of the EYFS curriculum. This is then used to inform the Raising Attainment Plan (RAP), which is reviewed termly.

Statutory Assessments

There are two statutory assessment points in Reception.

Reception Baseline Assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment is carried out within the first six weeks of pupils starting Reception. The RBA is a short, activity-based assessment of pupils' starting points in:

- language, communication and literacy
- mathematics

Pupils use practical resources to complete these tasks and teachers record the results on a tablet. It is not used to label or track individual pupils therefore no numerical score is shared. However, the assessment produces a short, narrative statement that explains how pupils performed. These are used to inform teaching within the first term.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

The EYFS Profile is a statutory summative assessment of children's development at the end of Reception. It is completed in the final term of the year in which the child turns 5. It is an assessment of the child's outcomes in relation to the 17 early learning goals (ELGs). Practitioners use their professional judgement to make these assessments, based on their knowledge and understanding of what the child knows, understands, and can do. Final judgements are informed by a range of perspectives, predominantly those of teaching staff, but also taking into account contributions from the child, parents/carers and other relevant adults.

Children are defined as having reached a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the EYFS if they have achieved the expected level for the ELGs in the prime areas of learning and the specific areas of mathematics and literacy. This helps teachers and parents to understand broadly what a child can do in relation to national expectations. The main purpose of the EYFSP assessment is to support a successful transition to Key Stage 1 by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and Year 1 teachers.

Section 3: Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

At Harrington Hill, all children are valued as unique individuals. All children are supported to access the full curriculum and make good progress, with reasonable adjustments and individualised planning made where necessary. Professional communication between families, teaching staff, the school SENCo and other professionals ensure that any child with potential Special Educational Needs (SEN) is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of SEN is crucial to enable staff to best support the development of each child. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's policy for SEN.

We meet the needs of all 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
- planning challenging activities for 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

Welfare

Harrington Hill recognises its statutory obligations to keep children safe. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. We understand that 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. 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.

At Harrington Hill, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (DfE, 2021). We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children through robust training and procedures
- 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 who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated with respect for their individual identity. We do not discriminate on account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability and social circumstances. The curriculum is designed to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and Safety

At Harrington Hill, there are clear procedures for assessing risk, including procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. Please see the safeguarding and child protection policy for further detail.

In line with the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (DfE, 2021), we ensure:

- a whole school medical needs policy outlines the systems in place for obtaining, storing and administering children's medication and first aid
- a first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept
- designated members of staff have up to date paediatric first aid training
- a whole school health and safety policy outlines the systems in place for identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment
- a whole school fire and emergency policy outlines the systems for evacuation
- fresh drinking water is available at all times
- the school kitchen offers healthy and sustainable daily meals

- fresh fruit is provided every day
- children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon

Section 4: Transition to KS1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile is informed by on-going observation and professional judgements by the class teacher and TAs, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1. During the final term of Reception, Reception and Year 1 teachers work together to plan transition activities, supporting children to feel ready for their transition to Year 1.