



# Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

## Hayward's Primary School



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### 1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children in the EYFS access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

### 2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2021 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

#### What legislation does this framework refer to?

The learning and development requirements are given legal force by an Order<sup>3</sup> made under section 39(1)(a) of the Childcare Act 2006

The safeguarding and welfare requirements are given legal force by Regulations<sup>4</sup> made under section 39(1)(b) of the Childcare Act 2006

### 3. Structure of the EYFS at Hayward's Primary School

The EYFS unit at Hayward's Primary School has two reception classes taking up to 60 children who are 4 or 5 years old (up to 30 children per class). There are two class bases (Red and Green Areas), a shared indoor space (Yellow Area) and a shared outdoor space (Blue Area), which at times is extended to include the front Key Stage 1 playground also. These are the spaces that form the EYFS unit.

There are currently four teachers in the unit (3 are EYFS specialists and one has considerable experience with KS1 and has taught Reception), one of whom is also the EYFS lead. There are also a team of 9 Teaching Assistants (TA's) (most part time) within the unit. Within the TA team, there are three qualified teachers and a nursery/pre-school specialist.

The unit operates at times on a free flow colour banded system. This is called Continuous Provision, where children can move between the areas of the unit and access the play-based provision available. There will be a mixture of adult led and child initiated experiences within this. This provision is also enhanced further by

whole class learning, weekly forest school sessions, small guided group learning, interventions/booster groups and 1 to 1 work (where necessary) each day.

Children enter EYFS at Hayward's having come from a range of backgrounds and a range of early years settings. There are 3 local pre-schools/nurseries which feed into Hayward's, but we also have children from Exeter nurseries, child minders and sometimes children who have not attended any pre-school/nursery provision. The EYFS team work closely with pre-schools and nurseries throughout the year prior (and in some cases earlier) to children starting reception to ensure that the transition process is as informative and as smooth as it can be. We are mindful about the importance of any children with SEND/medical needs being supported as effectively as they can be. We will support the pre-school settings in making referrals to additional services or with the EHCP process if required. The EYFS lead, Assistant Headteacher/SENDCo and members of the EYFS team are involved in these meetings. Staff from the local pre-schools/nurseries also visit the EYFS unit within the first couple weeks of children starting school to see how they have settled in and for children to show their familiar adults their new environment.

## 4. Curriculum

Our EYFS unit uses the Educational Programmes as outlined in the 2021 Statutory Framework for the EYFS to craft and plan the EYFS curriculum at Hayward's.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

These are viewed by our team as the roots of the tree and form a focus within the unit when children initially arrive at school to ensure that they have a firm foundation on which to build their future experiences, knowledge, language and skills.

The prime areas are strengthened and continue to be applied through the 4 specific areas, viewed by the team as the branches leaves of the tree,

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

We also ensure that the requirements for Religious Education (RE) and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) are included within the weekly whole class teaching sessions.

The team also ensure that the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (CoET&L) are promoted, encouraged and planned for within all aspects of the EYFS unit.

### 4.1 Planning

The EYFS team plan activities, experiences and provision that enable children to develop and learn effectively in a meaningful, purposeful and practical way. The team also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of the children and use this information to plan challenging and engaging experiences and activities. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, the team consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, to ensure a child's start to primary school is as successful as possible. This is done in conjunction with the support of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo) and in line with school policies and procedures. In planning and guiding children's activities, the team reflect on the different ways that children learn and develop and ensure that these are inter-woven into practice and provision.

The EYFS team plan through a topic approach to learning each term (or half term) which is in line with the rest of Hayward's Primary School. This carefully ensures that the EYFS Framework and Educational Programmes

are being covered in a balanced way, but also allows us to follow the children's collective interests. The team also has the flexibility to plan 'in the moment', ensuring that learning opportunities that present themselves are seized upon. This could be prompted by either child-initiated exploration or something significant that happens within the day (local events/news/ weather etc). We want to ensure that these opportunities are captured and utilised as effectively as possible. The team will use their judgement as to when these moments present themselves and planning for these moments will not be recorded on paper, but rather shown/captured through observations/photos/children's talk. In addition to this, separate Literacy, Maths, PSHE and RE plans are completed by the team. Music and Physical Education (PE) planning are also completed in line with the EYFS Framework by with the support of our specialist PE teacher and specialist music teacher with the support of the EYFS teachers.

## 4.2 Teaching

Teaching within EYFS happens from the minute children enter the EYFS unit until they leave at the end of the day. All staff within the unit teach the children each day. The team draws on the document, 'Teaching and Play in the Early Years - a balancing act?' (OfSTED 2015) to underpin their practice with regards to teaching. As a team, we believe that,

*Teaching is in every activity we provide. It is the summation of all that we do. There are no activities that occur in the setting which we do not consider to be opportunities for teaching. While we do not always know where these opportunities will present themselves, it is the skill of the adults that enable them to readily recognise the "teachable moments" when they arise and respond to them appropriately.*

*However, it is just as important to know when intervening would hinder or stifle children's learning. Knowing how or when to teach is about knowing the child very well and being aware that important learning can be taking place without you there and without you directing what children are doing.*

*(Page 9, OfSTED 2015)*

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Adults are responsive to children's changing needs and ensure that there is time to consolidate skills and knowledge. We provide opportunities for children to apply this in different contexts (deepening skills and knowledge) or challenge children in order to take them further in their learning and development.

Towards the Summer term in reception, and as children's development allows, the balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities gradually changes. We move towards more adult-led, whole class and guided group activities to help children prepare for their transition to Year 1 and the expectations of the National Curriculum. This is monitored closely by the teachers with there still being opportunities each day for child-initiated play and learning.

## 5. Assessment

At Hayward's Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. The team observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, their interests and their next steps. These observations are used to shape future planning, the EYFS environment and provision. The teachers also take into account observations shared by the children's previous early years settings and those of parents and/or carers.

Within the first 3-6 weeks of a child starting reception, the teachers complete a Baseline assessment. This is so that teachers have an accurate and informed understanding of a child's starting point and their next steps. The teams own observations, pre-school transition documents, home visit information and information from parents and/or carers also contribute to their overall Baseline assessment. This helps ensure that we have the most accurate picture possible of a child's starting point. Children will also undertake the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (known as the RBA) which assesses children's early Communication, Language and Literacy skills as well as early Mathematical Skills.

Assessment then happens every day through our interactions and observations of the children. Some observations will be recorded on Tapestry, an online Learning Journey Platform, which can be accessed and contributed to by children's parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are informed about this at the

transition information evening in the July prior to their child starting school in the September. The EYFS lead ensures that all the necessary paperwork is completed and accounts are set up and activated, supported by the other EYFS teachers (see other associated Hayward's policies and procedures). At the end of each half term, phonics assessments and a summative 'progress check' using the Development Matters document (2020) to support this process, will be completed to support planning for children's next steps. The team also use a 'Notice and Focus' approach to support children who have significant gaps within their learning, specifically within the Prime Areas, so that provision can be tailored to support their needs and current learning and development. The team then monitor these children closely and support them throughout the day as appropriate.

At the end of the children's reception year, teachers complete the EYFS profile (EYFSP) for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- **Meeting expected levels of development and achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD)** – scoring a 2 in the first 12 Early Learning Goals
- **Not yet reaching expected levels - 'emerging'** (scoring 1's)

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers throughout the year at termly parent's evenings and through the daily informal communication opportunities within EYFS (beginning and end of the day). The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers via an end of year EYFS report. Parents and/or carers then have an opportunity to discuss the report with their child's class teacher before their child leaves reception. This information is also passed onto the year one teachers to ensure that the teacher has an informed knowledge of the children before they start.

## 6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop effectively when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. This is an integral part of our EYFS experience at Hayward's Primary School and begins even before children start school. Parents and/or carers are invited to tour the school prior to their child starting. They are also encouraged to come to Story and Song time sessions with their child in the Summer Term. In July, parents and/or carers are also invited to an information evening, where they have a chance to meet the EYFS team, the Headteacher and other key members of staff, as well as exploring the unit while it is less busy. We also have a number of meetings to support individual transitions for children with additional needs before the children start, so that we can build relationships with the family and ensure that provisions are in place to make the transition to school as successful as possible.

In the September, the EYFS team carry out a home or school visit (school visits have happened since Covid) for each child in the first week of school to allow parents and/or carers a final opportunity to ask questions, gain reassurance and for teachers to find out some last 'golden nuggets' of information that will help us get to know the children in the first few days of school. Scheduling this for September ensures that the information we receive about a child is as up to date as possible, a lot can change from when we receive their transition documents before the Summer holiday. It is also a time where we will collect vital information (forms etc) which they would have been given at the information evening, so that we can ensure we have all the necessary admin information ready for the child to start school. We also ensure that Tapestry accounts can be set up to use in the first term. At Hayward's, we believe that our settling in process supports children and their families to make a successful transition into full time schooling. Our typical settling in process looks like this:

- Day 1, 2 and 3 of the first week of the new school year – teachers and TA's carry out school or home visits and children are not typically in school for these days.
- Day 4 – all children attend school for the morning 9am until 12noon and then go home.
- Day 5 – all children attend school for the morning and stay for lunchtime 9am until 1pm and then go home.
- Day 6 – all children attend school full time from now on 8:45am-3:30pm (collection starts from 3:25pm for Reception children to allow parents to collect other siblings in the school on time).

If it is felt that a staggered start or altered start times is necessary for your child, we will work with you to ensure that their settling in process is successful for them. We do recognise that your child is legally

entitled to attend full time schooling from the first day of the school year and if this is your preference, provision can be made for this, but we would ask that you talk to the EYFS team at your earliest opportunity if this is something you are considering.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development throughout the year as stated in the previous section. We also encourage parents into the unit for workshops and before Covid, open afternoons and family reading sessions (which we will hope to start again soon) to allow parents and/or carers to be a significant part of their child's reception year. All these ways we communicate with parents and/or carers help to provide them with an informed and accurate picture of their child's knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities throughout their reception year.

## **7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures**

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school safeguarding policy.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by The EYFS lead and Headteacher every year and shared with governors for approval. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board where appropriate, changes will be discussed and made.

The EYFS governor will meet regularly with the EYFS lead to ensure that the policy and procedures are being implemented fully. The EYFS governor will work closely with staff and provide portfolio reports at Full Governor meetings.

## **Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS**

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found within Hayward's School Policies?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policies
Procedure for responding to illness and infectious diseases	See health and safety policy See School Emergency Management Plan
Administering medicines and supporting intimate care	See intimate care policy See Administration of Medicines Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See School Emergency Management Plan
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policies See Visitor booklet and Guidance
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policies
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy