Holyport CE Primary School & Foundation Unit

Early Years Policy

HOLYPORT CE PRIMARY SCHOOL	
date policy adopted and signed by LGB: 7 May 2025	NAME AND SIGNATURE Chair of Governors: *Paul Mew*
Name of Head teacher: Amanda Featherstone	Signature of Head teacher: *A. Featherstone*
Date to be reviewed: May 2026	This policy will be subject to review annually by the Governing Body in the light of changes in the curriculum or provision or legislation or advice from the ODST/LA.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of early years education at our school. It relates to children in both the Pre- Reception and Reception classes. It should be used by all staff to ensure that children are happy, engaged in their learning and achieve well.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children 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.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents/carers.
- That every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2024 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – effective from January 2024 and The Foundation Stage Profile 2023/4

Introduction

- "The EYFS is about what children learn, as well as how they learn. Effective practice is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other and through adult-guided learning." (taken from the 2024 Statutory Framework for the EYFS)
- Early Years education is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives and it encompasses all aspects of learning.is concerned with the development of the whole child based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) documentation.
- All children are given opportunities to develop in and beyond the seven areas of learning and development.
- Children who have attained the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) will encounter the early stages of the National Curriculum.
- Children are viewed as individuals with their specific needs being met in appropriate ways.
- Independence is fostered and each child is encouraged to make choices, take decisions and reach their full potential.
- The EYFS seeks to provide:

  • Quality and consistency so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.

  • A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
  • Partnership working between practitioners (staff) and with parents and/or carers.
  • Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Overarching Principles

There are four guiding principles that shape practice. These are:

1. **Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.**
2. **Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.**
3. **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 benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.**
4. **Children develop and learn at different rates. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.18). The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).**

Structure of early years

In our school, early years refers to the education for Pre-Reception and Reception aged children. Our Pre- Reception has 8 morning spaces. The children are in Pre-Reception for 15 hours per week from the September after they turn 3 years old and all places are funded.

We have 30 places in Reception. The children are in school full time from the September after they turn 4 years old.

The EYFS Curriculum

The school has a curriculum, which sets out to support the EYFS Statutory Framework.
There are seven areas of learning and development and all areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three prime areas are particularly important for learning and forming relationships. They build a foundation for children to thrive and provide the basis for learning in all areas.

Areas of Learning and Development

These are the prime areas:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

In our school:

- There is a well-planned and resourced curriculum, based on real experiences.
- The stimulating learning environment both in and outdoors encourages children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experiences.
- We ensure all areas of learning are regarded with the same level of importance and are interlinked in learning.
- There are fundamental British values, which are part of the school's own Christian values teaching – helping the children develop a sense of self and belonging.
- We enable children to learn and stay true to the values that make people good human beings.
- We ensure that children learn to live together peacefully, with each of them playing a valuable role in the multi-cultural world in which they live.
- Children are able to move between the indoor and outdoor areas throughout the day.
- The curriculum is organised into Themes with the Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development.

The Four Themes

The four themes of the EYFS underpin all the guidance:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and thinking critically

These identify the ways in which children engage with others and their environment.

They underpin learning and development across all areas and enable children to be effective and motivated learners.

These areas include essential skills and knowledge.
They grow out of the prime areas and provide important contexts for learning.

Educational Programmes

Communication and Language

- The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development.
- Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively.
- Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive.
- Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Physical Development

- Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives
- Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults.
- By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility.
- Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being.
- Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy.
- Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world.
- Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others.
- Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary.
- Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently.
- Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably.

These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life**.**

Literacy

- It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading.
- Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together.

- Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words.

- Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Mathematics

- Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically.
- Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built.
- In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World

- Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community.
- The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters.
- In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world.
- As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Arts and Design

- The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials.
- The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts.
- The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

The Early Learning Goals

- The early learning goals (ELGs), define the level of development children should have attained, by the end of the Reception year.
- The ELGs are not used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development.
- The ELGs support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development.
- When forming a judgement about whether a child is at the expected level of development, teachers draw on their knowledge of the child and on their own professional judgement.

The 17 areas of the ELGs are:

Communication & Language:

- Listening, Attention & Understanding
- Speaking

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

Physical Development

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

Understanding the World

- Past & Present
- People, Culture & Communities
- The Natural World

Expressive Arts & Design

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

Learning through Play–Our "Busy Learning" vision

- Play is a powerful vehicle through which children learn.
- Throughout the day they are given opportunities for periods of uninterrupted play, which we term 'Busy Learning' time.
- During this time, a wide range of resources are provided, enabling children to play by themselves or with others.
- The inside and outside learning environments are carefully planned and resourced to enable staff to both support and extend children's spontaneous play and to promote planned play activities.
- The outdoor area complements the indoor provision but also extends learning as it offers opportunities that are not available indoors.
- Staff have developed approaches such as 'Loose Parts Play', 'Helicopter Stories' to enhance provision
- With effective adult support in a secure but challenging environment, children practice new skills, try out new ideas, think creatively and imaginatively and explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world.
- Independent learning will be encouraged through planned continuous provision where children can make their own selection from a variety of resourced areas, including:

    - Sand and Water areas (indoor and outdoor) and outside Mud Kitchen
    - Painting easels
    - Clay/Dough Area
    - Snack and food preparation area
    - Creation Station
    - Maths throughout all areas
    - Literacy/writing area such as 'Message Centre' and Book Corner
    - Role Play
    - Construction
    - Small world
    - Loose Parts Resources
    - Investigation Station; exploring STEM resources
    - Garden/allotment tubs and planters
    - Music Area
    - Obstacle Course, range of Sports equipment freely available, balance bikes for Physical Development

Appropriate and stimulating educational visits and visitors, from both within and outside of the local community, will be arranged to further expand children's learning experiences.

Effective Planning

Observation and assessment of children's learning and interests, enables staff to identify next steps of learning and plan effectively, for the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

- The developmental age of the children is taken into account, as well as differentiation to allow for individual needs.
- The children's knowledge, skills, understanding and independence are developed alongside positive attitudes.
- Long- and medium-term plans, outline the broad-brush strokes of what children will be learning in each area of learning and development, ensuring progression from the start of nursery to the end of Reception.
- Short-term planning takes place both weekly and daily, recording the detail of what is to be taught and how this will happen.

- These plans follow a structure but are flexible enough to allow for individuality, spontaneous events and children's interests.
- Continuous and enhanced provision, enables children to make choices within a broad range of experiences, on a daily basis so they can plan or initiate activities themselves.

Quality Teaching

- Planning is used to provide quality first teaching.
- This teaching is led by teachers and early years practitioners (EYPs).
- Children are taught in: class sessions, guided sessions and individually;
- This direct teaching gives the children the knowledge and skills to apply independently.
- Adults also teach children through the environments while children are "busy learning".

Using Assessments

- On-going assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes.
- Staff observe children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles;
- These observations are used to shape future planning and identify individual needs.
- We also take into account observations shared by parents/carers.
- Within the first 6 weeks of starting reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).
- Staff will also make their own observations and assessments of each child to inform our own on-entry judgments about children's level of development.
- Staff will continue to make these observations throughout the year.
- Some of these observations and assessments are recorded in children's individual learning journals (online programme called Tapestry) whilst others are kept on documents for staff to refer to. These include contributions from all staff working with the child, as well as, the parents/carers. They also show identified next steps of learning.
- Assessments are used to plan and support the next steps of learning and identify individual children's needs.
- Children's attainment and progress is formally tracked three times a year and the data analysed to identify where any interventions are needed.
- Observations and assessments of children's learning, are also used as evidence to support judgements made when completing the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.
- Moderation usually takes place in the Spring and Summer Term with local schools where possible and ensures consistency.
- Results are analysed to identify individual issues for Year 1 and implications for teaching and learning in the foundation stage.
- Parents/carers receive 2 formal written reports on their child's progress; 1 at the end of both the Pre-Reception and Reception years. They also receive an interim report in the Spring Term of each year sharing their child's engagement in the Early Years Curriculum.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile (EYFSP) for each child.

- Children are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are: - Meeting expected levels of development - Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').
- The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents/carers.
- The results of the profile are shared with parents/carers for their child.
- The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance).
- Staff also attend local moderation with staff from other schools across the local authority to have their judgements verified and ensure consistency.
- EYFSP data is submitted to the local authority.

Assessment information shared on transition to Year 1

Year 1 teachers must be given a copy of the Profile report. Reception teachers (or early years practitioners where the Profile has been completed for a child who has remained in registered early years provision) may choose to provide a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning (see paragraph 1.18 of the EYFS Statutory Framework). These should help inform a discussion between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assist with the planning of activities in year 1.

Learning Resources

Learning resources are an important part of the inside and outside learning environments.

- Resources in the indoor and outdoor busy learning areas, are presented in an exciting way, to stimulate children's curiosity and interest.
- Resources are added to, or changed regularly, to reflect children's needs and interests.
- Where possible, children are involved in the selection of resources.
- Resources are clearly labelled and accessible to all children, helping to encourage independence and responsibility.
- A range of displays support and enhance the learning environment.
- All displays and busy learning areas have photos, fiction, non-fiction and practitioner made books to enhance learning.

Continuity and Progression

- Links are made, where possible, with pre-school settings and other childcare professionals before children are admitted.
- Verbal discussions and records of assessments help staff to make appropriate provision for children.
- Continuity between the Pre-Reception and the Reception children is strong. The children learn and play together inside and outside with staff working in close collaboration.
- Dedicated Nursery Nurse support is in place in the morning Pre-Reception session.
- Links continue into Year 1 to build on achievements and influence the curriculum provided.

Staffing

- Children in Reception are taught in a mixed ability class by a Teacher (QTS) and a Teaching Assistant, with the teacher having over-all responsibility for the class.
- There is also a NNEB trained TA in the setting with a small group of part-time, Pre-Reception children (8 or less).
- Some children with special educational needs may be supported by a classroom or learning support assistant.
- Adult: child ratios are usually 1 : 8 (max) in Pre-Reception and 1 : 15 (min) in Reception.
- Children must usually be within sight and hearing of staff. Whilst eating, children must be within sight and hearing of a member of staff (Refer to our Safer Eating Policy)
- Staff regularly update their knowledge and expertise by attending courses and network meetings within ODST and RBWM, disseminating information to the team and by taking part in school-based CPD.
- EYFS staff have a good understanding of how young children develop and learn, knowing when and how to intervene in children's learning to support and/or extend.
- Staff ensure that they engage in quality interactions with children throughout the day.

Inclusion and supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities

- All children are given equal access to and encouraged to take part in, all activities.
- There is a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued and where racial, religious, disability and gender stereotypes are challenged.
- All activities are planned to encourage the full and active participation of all children whatever their ability, ensuring that individual potential is met.
- No child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.
- The school provides SEN TAs called 'Helping Hands' for children with significant special needs
- The school has a designated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, Mrs Katie Healy who supports staff in supporting children with additional needs. She is also available for parents/carers who wish to discuss their child's SEN. She can be contacted via email senco@holyportprimaryschool.co.uk or in person or by telephone.
- The school published its SEN Information Report, for the Local Offer and this is available on the school's website along with SEN advice and signposting to other support and advice.

Health and Safety

- The safe use of equipment is taught and the idea of a safe environment is promoted.
- An emphasis is placed on personal health and hygiene at all times.
- There is an Early Years Environment Risk Assessment, which is monitored by the Early Years Staff, Site Controller and Health and Safety Officer.
- The Early Years teacher risk assesses any additional activities or trips when necessary.
- A first-aid box is located in the Reception Office room and also in the school's medical room.
- Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist is administered.
- The school's Supporting Children's Medical Needs and Administering Medicines in School Policy outlines the procedures for administering medicines.
- The EYFS practitioners report any accident or injury involving a child to the parent on the day it occurs, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child is reported to the parent.
- The headteacher reports 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 are also notified.
- The school has a Fire Evacuation Plan in place.
- The headteacher notifies Ofsted of any incidents of food poisoning affecting two or more children within 14 days of the incident. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has are recorded.
- Any food or drink provided to children is healthy, balanced and nutritious.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Smoking is not permitted on the school premises.

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

Safeguarding

The school will take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and comply with the requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage' to:

- Safeguard children.
- Ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children.
- Promote good health.
- Manage behaviour.

- Maintain records, policies, and procedures.
- Child protection.

Staff will be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. 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 will be required to read this policy as part of their induction training.

- There is always a practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the school and this is known as the 'Designated Safeguarding Lead'.
- At Holyport, we have a team of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and they ensure there is always a practitioner available and responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSP (Local Safeguarding Partners).
- All EYFS staff must be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.
- Staff report any concerns via CPOMS to the D(DSL). These include any low-level concerns for a child's wellbeing, protection and safety, mental health and/or physical needs for example.
- Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's safeguarding and child protection policy and these apply to the Foundation Stage setting and staffing.
- The school has a range of related safeguarding policies, such as: What to do if a child is missing or absconds from school, Whistleblowing, Managing allegations against staff.
- All staff are trained annually at Holyport, by Achieving for Children, so that they understand our safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues.
- Training enables staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:
  • Significant changes in children's behaviour.
  • A decline in children's general well-being.
  • Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.
  • Concerning comments from children.
  • Inappropriate behaviour from practitioners, or any other person working with the children. This could include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to-one attention beyond what is required through their role; or inappropriate sharing of images.
  • Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation.

  In the case of Early years children, only siblings aged 16 or over can collect children at the end of the day.

- There is at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate. The school organises PFA training to be renewed every three years.

Use of mobile phones by staff members

- Staff members do not use personal mobile phones or cameras when children are present. Staff may use mobile phones on school premises outside of working hours when no children are present. Staff may use mobile phones in the staffroom during breaks and non-contact time.
- Mobile phones are safely stored and in silent mode whilst children are present. Staff may take mobile phones on trips, but they are only be used in emergencies and are not used when children are present. Mobile phones are not be used to take images or videos at any time during trips.
- Staff who do not adhere to this policy face disciplinary action. Staff use their professional judgement in emergency situations.
- Staff report any concerns about another staff member's use of mobile phones to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.

Use of mobile phones by parents, visitors and contractors

Posters are used around the school to indicate that it is a mobile free zone. Parents, visitors and contractors are not permitted to take photographs or record videos without prior permission. Parents may take photographs and videos containing their own child during school events. Where the photograph or video would contain other people (e.g. during a school production), parents are only permitted to take photographs and videos in line with the school's rules for ensuring they are not posted onto any social media.

Use of School devices

- Staff will be provided with a school device (such as an Ipad) to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos. School devices will have passcode protection.
- School devices will only be used for work related matters, e.g. recording and documenting a child's learning. School devices will only be used to take photographs in the presence of another staff member and only with the consent of the child's parent.
- Staff will not take photographs of bruising or injuries for child protection reasons. Instead, recording concerns forms and body maps will be used to record observations relating to child protection concerns – these can be acquired from the DSL.
- School devices will not be taken off school premises without prior written permission from the headteacher. Where staff members have concerns over material on a school device, they will report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Admissions

- Children are usually admitted to the Pre-Reception in the second week of the first half term of the school year, following a home visit or in school visit and several visits to the setting in the previous term.
- Pre- Reception children attend for half day sessions only.
- Generally, children start school immediately in Reception and are supported to settle through collaboration with parents and staff.
- Children who have not attended the Pre – Reception will have a home visit or an in-school partnership meeting before being starting in September.
- Children who join the school during the year will either be visited at home or invited to visit school prior to admission.

Home/School Links

- The importance and value of positive home/school links is recognised, as working with parents/carers has a positive impact on children's development and learning.
- There is a home visiting programme enabling a positive partnership with parents/carers to be initiated.
- Parents are encouraged to become involved as partners in their child's education. Children's achievements out of school are recorded in Tapestry (Online Learning Journals) and contribute towards planning for individuals.
- Discussions take place informally at the beginning or end of the day and on a more formal basis during termly open evenings.
- Parents/carers are invited to visit the Nursery with their child before he/she is admitted and their child's Reception class in the Summer Term before transferring.
- In addition to induction meetings a variety of curriculum meetings are held for parents/carers.