



Improving Outcomes
Increasing Life-Chances



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Signed:  on behalf of Trustees

Date: 17.11.2023

ALL DIFFERENT, ALL EQUAL, ALL LEARNING

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1. Aims

School Aims:	Respect, Help, Learn, Enjoy, Achieve.
School Self Review:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How high are standards?• Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development.• How well are pupils taught?• How good are curricular & learning opportunities?• How well does the school care for its pupils?• How well is the school led & managed?• How well does the school work in partnership with parents?• How effective is the school?

At our school we aim to follow the principles set out in the EYFS so that every child can learn and develop effectively. The principles are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- The Unique Child. We recognise that every child is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships. We recognise that secure relationships enable children to learn to become strong and independent.
- Enabling Environments. We recognise that the environment plays a key role in which children's experiences can respond to their individual needs thereby allowing them to learn and develop well; furthermore, that a child's development is supported through strong partnerships between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Learning and Development. We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates.

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up." ('The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.' DfE).

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for 2023.

3. Structure of the EYFS

Within Mousehold Infant and Nursery school we have one nursery class and three reception classes:

- Kingfisher class for 3- and 4-year-old children.
- Our nursery class operates on a sessional basis. Families can select any 5 sessions across the week. If choosing two sessions on one day, the cost of lunchtime supervision is £2. See Nursery admissions and charging policy.
- Within Reception we have Greenfinch, Chaffinch and Goldfinch classes.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS statutory framework. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 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

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

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

Subject Leader/Contact Person: Ian Tolson

4.1 Planning

To meet the needs of every child we plan for their learning using the 'Birth to Five Matters' document. The development statements are used to identify areas in which to challenge and extend the child's current learning and development. We are continually drawing on the children's own interests making sure there is ample opportunity to cover the PSED objectives that are so important for children in the EYFS.

Each area of learning has Early Learning goals which establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. When planning and guiding children's activities, staff support and extend the different ways that children learn by reflecting these in their practice.

The three Characteristics of Effective Learning which underpin the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development 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; and
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

At our school, staff prioritize the individual needs, interests, and developmental stages of each child to create engaging and enjoyable learning experiences. When children have special educational needs or disabilities, we seek advice and support, collaborating with relevant services from other agencies as needed.

We believe that children learn best when they are active and engaged with their environment. As a result, outdoor experiences are an integral and permanent part of our daily curriculum. Our 'planning in the moment' approach empowers staff to make spontaneous decisions based on each child's immediate needs, ensuring that our planning remains engaging and relevant. This approach is instrumental in nurturing a strong disposition and a healthy attitude towards learning.

We understand that not all learning can be planned in advance. Therefore, we intentionally create an enabling environment where children's play is regarded as the most effective and enjoyable method for them to engage with their learning. Children's play provides valuable insights into their understanding of the world, encouraging creativity, thoughtful exploration, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

The role of adults in our early years' classrooms is crucial. They work alongside children rather than always leading them. Every interaction with a child is seen as an opportunity to support their learning, with a strong focus on responsiveness and advancing learning in the moment."

4.2 Teaching

At Mousehold Infant and Nursery School, we take a holistic approach to supporting every child's development.

In our early years' classrooms, we foster learning and development through both planned and spontaneous, purposeful play, and a combination of adult-developed and child-initiated activities. Our practitioners are responsive to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through secure and positive interactions, while encouraging autonomy within the learning environment.

Throughout the year, in Reception, we implement a rolling program of 'Focus Children,' with three children selected each week. This approach provides us with a detailed understanding of their learning styles, interests, strengths, areas for development, and next steps. We actively engage parents to ensure a comprehensive view of each child's development.

We place a strong emphasis on promoting and supporting communication and language skills for both children and adults. In Nursery and Reception, our teaching assistants implement speech and language programs, designed by our Speech and Language Therapist or external agencies. We use the Early Talk Boost program to assist children in developing their communication and language skills.

For phonics, we use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds program, which offers a systematic and comprehensive approach to developing children's reading skills.

5. Assessment

At Mousehold Infant and Nursery School ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Our staff observe pupils to identify their levels of achievement, interests, and learning styles. These observations play a crucial role in shaping our future planning. We also value and consider observations shared by parents and/or carers.

We document our observations in various ways with contributions encouraged from everyone in the classroom. Evidence is collected in the form of:

- Post-it notes, including quotes from the child and descriptions of the learning taking place.
- Photographs
- Observations of focus children
- Pieces of written, drawn, or created work.

5.1 Baseline

We assess children in each of the seven areas of learning by observing them engaged in their play within the first six weeks of their start in our reception class. This helps us accurately determine the starting points of each child. In addition, we complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment set by the Department for Education.

5.2 Reporting

At the end of the EYFS our staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils 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 and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers, and the profile is internally moderated (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools to ensure consistent assessment judgments. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority when requested.

These ongoing assessments of children's learning are conducted by all members of EYFS staff to identify needs, inform planning, and enable staff to interact appropriately with children during play. We use Pupil Asset, a data tracking program, to track each child's progress by inputting observations, allowing us to monitor progress over time and ensure that every child in the EYFS is making good progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

6. Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop best when there's a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. Collaborative efforts between parents and practitioners have a positive impact on a child's development.

- We invite all parents/carers of children into the school prior to children starting for a stay and play sessions and a home visit is made.

- We keep parents informed about phonics objectives covered in our class, providing opportunities for follow-up at home.
- We host monthly Open Classrooms and regular stay-and-play sessions to discuss progress, the curriculum, and upcoming events.
- Information sessions are conducted to support parents, including how we teach phonics and the reading scheme.
- We maintain an 'open-door' policy, allowing parents/guardians to come and discuss concerns and developments informally.
- We encourage parents/guardians to listen to their child read each night.
- We organise school events and performances, Forest School activities, and trips.

Parents are invited to attend parent consultations or stay-and-play sessions twice a year, in the Autumn term and again in the Spring term, to discuss their child's progress and share their next steps. At the end of the year, reports are sent to all parents of EYFS pupils. These reports comment on the Characteristics of Effective Learning and provide an assessment of a child's achievement against the Early Learning Goals.

Parents and/or carers are kept updated on their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps provide them with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding, and abilities.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise 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 follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

We promote the good health and oral health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development, talking about oral hygiene, dentist visits and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident. The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the **Whole School Safeguarding Policy Incorporating Child Protection**.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Head of School every year.

At every review, this policy will be shared with the board of Trustees.

Appendix 1 – List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Whole School Safeguarding Policy Incorporating Child Protection
Procedure for responding to illness	See First Aid Policy (updating)
Administering medicines policy	See First Aid Policy (updating)
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Business Continuity Plan (updating)
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Whole School Safeguarding Policy Incorporating Child Protection
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Whole School Safeguarding Policy Incorporating Child Protection
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints Policy

Appendix 2 – Table of Changes

Date of Change	Paragraphs Affected	Summary of Update
November 2023	All	New policy adopted and adapted.