Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School

EYFS Policy

Date: November 2024

Signed:

Nicola O'Connell – Headteacher

Jane Bisseker – Chair of Governors

'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'

"Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage",
Department for Education, 2021

At Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School, we are committed to providing a high quality early years' education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

Staffing and Organisation

At Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School, we have a Nursery Class and two full time Reception classes in our Foundation Stage Unit. We have an open planned shared Reception classroom and a nursery classroom with a dedicated outdoor area. The classrooms have a carpet area for each class and the rest of the space is organised into learning zones for the children to access. The Nursery class has a teacher and two full time Nursery Nurses and a learning support assistant. In Reception there are two full time teachers, supported by four part time learning support assistants. We have a further two learning support assistants that are deployed in Reception based on the needs of the children.

Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult led and child initiated experiences throughout the day. Most sessions include free flow access to the outdoor area. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

The Nursery Class is organised into three key worker groups. The children have small group time within these groups and parents have regular contact with their child's key worker.

Curriculum

At Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School, we follow the statutory curriculum requirements as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum that covers the statutory aspects as well as other knowledge and skills to support pupils' personal development, prepare children for their next stage of education and develop the whole child.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

· **A unique child.** We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement as well as celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.

· **Positive relationships.** We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

· **Enabling environments.** We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

· **Learning and development.** The Foundation Unit is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The unit is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five. There are three prime areas of learning:

Communication and Language
Physical Development
Personal, Social and Emotional Development

In addition, there are four core areas of learning:

Literacy
Mathematics
Understanding the World
Expressive Arts and Design

Whilst planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn and these are incorporated into our practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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.

Our planning has a sharp focus on the children's needs, their interests and their stages of development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

Long Term Planning

Our long term planning shows our aims and values, demonstrates how our continuous provision meets the EYFS requirements and promotes learning within the areas of learning and development, tracks the learning objectives that have been covered and highlights any key events to be included.

Medium Term Planning

At Holtsmere End Infants School & Nursery School, we deliver a creative curriculum, which is based around a new topic each half term. Medium term planning shows the key learning experiences for each area of the curriculum. Practitioners use this flexibly, choosing learning experiences to meet the needs of the children. At the beginning of each topic, practitioners lead the children in discussion to identify areas that they are particularly interested in. These ideas are incorporated into the medium term plan.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning shows the learning opportunities that will be available over the week. It includes differentiated adult led experiences for all curriculum areas, as well as showing how the learning environment will be enhanced in response to the previous week's observations and assessment of the children.

Effective Teaching and Learning

We encourage the children to play an active role in shaping their learning experiences. Adults engage in discussion with the children about what they are interested in, which skills they would like to develop further and which resources they need to support their learning. The children regularly look at and discuss their Learning Journey's and are encouraged to make comments about all the learning they have engaged in.

We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. There is a range of "continuous provision" available in the classrooms, that are designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. Each week, the provision is enhanced with additional resources, based on the previous week's observations.

Adult led activities are practical in nature and based on first hand experiences wherever possible. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The number of adult led activities that the children take part in increases throughout the year, as their concentration develops.

Observation and Assessment

At Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. During child initiated activities, practitioners make 'snapshot' observations on an interactive profile using iPads. We also use post it notes when required. Notes about guided activities are also recorded.

In the summer term, practitioners consider the ELGS in the EYFS Profile to decide whether each child is working at the expected levels, exceeding the levels or have not yet met the levels. Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observation; all relevant records; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults that can offer a useful contribution.

At the end of the year, Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This helps to create a smooth transition and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

The EYFS profile results are reported to the local authority, who monitor and moderate the judgements made.

Working in Partnership

We recognise that children may access EYFS provision through other providers throughout the week and that all providers have an equally important role to play in their early years experiences. We seek information about the other settings that our children attend so that we can establish communication about their learning and development.

Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience. Resources are clearly labeled and organised into learning zones, enabling the children to access them with a high level of independence. Practitioners regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the learning zones and make adaptations as necessary.

Parent Partnerships

We value the contribution that our parents and carers make to their child's learning and take every opportunity to work in collaboration with them. Each term, we publish a newsletter to inform parents of what their child will be learning and how they can support them at home. In the Autumn and Spring terms we hold parents' consultations and in the Summer term we send home detailed reports. There are regular opportunities for parents to view their child's Learning Journey. In the reception classes the children take reading books home to share and can also choose a book each day from our book boxes. Throughout the year, there are parent's meetings where parents can find out how their child learns in school.

The results of the Profile are shared with parents and/or carers, and there are opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss this information.

Community Links and the Wider World

Over the year, we arrange visits from members of the local community to support our topic work. We also arrange trips for children in the EYFS. The children take part in educational visits linked to their topic work. Film clips, non-fiction texts and artefacts are also used to introduce new concepts in real-life contexts. We aim to develop the children's awareness of other cultures by exploring different countries and celebrations.

Behaviour Management

Please refer to the school's 'Behaviour Management' policy.

Safeguarding

Please refer to the school's 'Safeguarding Children' policy.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference. We can support each child's needs by:

- removing or helping to overcome barriers where these already exist;
- being alert to the early signs of needs that could later lead to difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as required;
- stretching and challenging all children.

Please refer to the school's 'Equality of Opportunities' and 'SEN' policies.

Premises and Security

All access to the school is through the main school door, which is kept locked. Staff use a secure fob to gain access to the building and sign in and out. The office staff are responsible for verifying the identity of any visitors before they enter school. Visitors are asked to sign in to the school visitor's log and are given a visitor sticker to wear. Staff are aware of their role in challenging anyone who is not recognized and asking for identification from anyone claiming to be from an outside agency.

The external classroom doors are kept locked, except when the children enter and leave the setting at the beginning and end of their sessions and when the children access the playground for playtimes and lunchtime. The door to the outdoor area is kept locked when this area is not in use. The gate to the playground is kept locked apart from when the children enter and leave at each end of the school day.

The external doors are closely monitored by staff when children are entering or leaving the setting, to ensure that they cannot leave unaccompanied. All staff are aware of the need to monitor the external doors to ensure that they are secure during the session. The register is used to check how many children are present. When moving from one area school to another, head counts are used to check that all children are present before leaving.

Arrival and Collection of Children

Children in Nursery can enter school from 8:45 with a 9am start. Reception children come in from 8.45. Each child is marked in on the day's register by the class teacher. Parents/carers use the external classroom doors when collecting their child(ren) at the end of the school day. If a child needs to be collected during the school day, parents report to the school office.

If a child is not collected and the parent/guardian is not contactable, the other names on the child's registration form will be called to collect the child. If the unlikely event of nobody on the child's registration form being contactable, the Social Services Duty Officer or Out of Hours Duty Point would be phoned.

Outings

Written parental permission to take the children into the local environment is sought upon admission to the school. Further permission is obtained for any other outings. Risk assessments are completed for each type of outing.

Risk Assessments

In addition to the school's risk assessment, daily risk assessments are completed in the EYFS Unit to ensure that any hazards are identified and managed before the children enter the classroom.

Information for Parents and Carers

Day to day information for parents are displayed in the classroom windows and notice boards. Curriculum and planning information is available via the school website.

Key workers in nursery- Parents are informed about their child's key worker and details of the keyworker system. They are informed that the key worker make sure that records of development and progress are maintained and shared with them. They are encouraged to speak to them on a regular basis to share special moments and achievements.

Transition from Pre-school to Nursery/Reception

We work with our feeder settings to ensure that the children make a smooth transition to school. We have contact with the settings throughout the year and invite them to visit us on a regular basis. In the Summer term, we organise opportunities for each setting to bring groups of children to visit.

In September, we hold parent meetings before the children start to gather information about them and answer any questions that parents may have.
Routines such as assemblies and playtimes are built up gradually, with support from the children's key people.

Transition from Reception to Year One

In the Summer term, we begin a programme of transition to support the children with their move to Year One. This involves visits to the Year One classroom, discussion with current Year One children, walks to look at where they will enter school and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year. The school holds a 'Move Up' morning, giving the children a taste of their new class and also arrange a transition meeting for parents.

The Year One classroom area is organised to reflect aspects of Reception provision, for example by the inclusion of learning zones. The first half term of Year One is based on the principles of the EYFS, allowing the children to feel secure in their new environment.
Please refer to the 'Transition Policy' for more information.

Being Active

The children have access to an outdoor area, which provides a range of physical activities; including soft play blocks, large balls, bats and balls, rockers and digging equipment. They are also able to access the play equipment on the main playground. The children take part in one PE sessions each week.

Oral Health

We teach the children about healthy eating habits, and dental hygiene. We talk to the children about the effects of eating too many sweet things and promote regular tooth brushing and encourage parents to promote good oral health at home.

Food and Drink

We provide a 'free flow' snack area in the foundation classrooms. A range of healthy snacks are available, supplied by "The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme". Children are supported to wash their hands with soap before selecting a snack and pouring their own drink. The snack bar is accessible throughout the morning, allowing the children to make decisions about when they are hungry and thirsty. Practitioners monitor who has accessed the snack bar and remind children to remain seated when eating and drinking. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and in hot weather, it is also provided in a seated location in the outdoor area.

Information about the children's dietary needs is sought when they enter the setting. A list of the children's dietary needs is available in the classroom and all practitioners have regard to this when putting out food and drink in the snack area or when leading a cooking or food tasting activity.

The school dinner menus are displayed in the classroom windows so that parents and carers can support their children to choose their food.

Illnesses and Injuries

Parents and carers are asked not to send their child to school if they are unwell and to inform the school office of their absence. Parents/carers are asked to inform staff if their child is suffering from a minor ailment so that appropriate care can be given. Children must not return to school within 48 hours of a bout of sickness or diarrhea.

If a child becomes unwell whilst at school, a member of staff will:

- phone the parents/carers, explain that their child is unwell, explain the symptoms noted and ask them to collect their child.
- sit with the child in a quiet place away from other children, if possible, until the parents arrive.
- if the child has had sickness or diarrhea, explain the policy of at least a 48 hour clearance of either symptom before the child may return.

Advice relating to notifiable diseases is displayed in the school office.
In the case of an injury, appropriate first aid will be administered by a qualified first aider. A first aid kit is kept in the Foundation kitchen area and its contents are checked and topped up regularly. We also have pediatric first aiders within our foundation team. First aid cover is provided at playtimes and lunchtimes. All accidents are recorded in one of the school's accident books and signed by the member of staff who dealt with the incident. The staff member dealing with the incident is responsible for completing an accident slip and this is sent home with the child at the end of the day. Parents/carers may be contacted by telephone to inform them of an injury if deemed necessary.

This Policy will be reviewed on an annul basis.