



"Believe, Succeed, Inspire"

Primary School

## Early Years Policy

### October 2019

Ratified by the Governing Body: Autumn 2019

Review Date: Autumn 2021

At Harlowbury Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent and to develop a positive growth mind-set. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

*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 March 2017).*

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Tapestry Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Home School agreement
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Home Learning Policy
- Curriculum Statement
- Inclusion Policy and SEND Offer
- Child Protection Policy
- Medical Needs Policy

The EYFS framework is based upon four principles:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

At Harlowbury Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for our children based on these principles.

## **1. A unique Child**

1.1 At Harlowbury Primary School we recognise that children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and we begin to build links with the families. We observe how each child learns to gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop to become effective learners. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. During their first year at school, the children are introduced to the learning habits. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, cooperative and to use reasoning. Children begin to understand the concept of the growth mind-set. They develop an understanding that everyone can learn with practice and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

1.2 Induction into school – All children are invited to attend the school in the term before they start to meet the staff and to access the environment. Teachers liaise with previous settings and specialist teachers if necessary. Children start school on a part time basis to ensure an easy transition and are gradually involved with other aspects of school of life over time.

1.3 Transition into Year 1: In the final term at Harlowbury Primary School, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

1.4 We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Planning for children with additional needs is completed in liaison with the school's Inclusion Manager.

1.5: Inclusion: All children and their families are valued within our school. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate because of differences. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society. We do not group children based on notions of fixed ability. We teach the children that practice and effort lead to learning and improvement. Teachers plan activities that enable all children to access the learning and to achieve as highly as possible. In the early years the children begin to learn to take responsibility for their learning and begin to understand the concept of challenge.

## **2. Positive Relationships**

2.1 At Harlowbury School we value developing good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We recognise that this is a major step in a child becoming a confident and resilient learner.

2.2 We carry out home visits during the first weeks of the September term before the child starts full time. This helps to grow the relationship with the parents and to answer questions they or the children may have as well as allowing staff an insight into the family that will help them to understand the child.

2.3 We encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning and to create an atmosphere of partnership by

- Providing a friendly, welcoming environment and being available to talk to parents at the end of the day.
- encouraging parents to attend parent's evenings in term two to discuss their child's learning and development
- Encouraging parents to attend 'stay and learn' to see how their children are being taught and what they do during part of the school day
- Encouraging parents to attend the monthly Open Door to share and celebrate learning
- Encouraging parents to stay with their child until they are settled especially in the early part of the year
- Within the final term we provide the parent's with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning
- Keeping up with fortnightly News Flash and termly class newsletters detailing key dates and information about topics etc
- Using Tapestry as a means of sharing children's achievements with their adults by publishing

observations covering each ELG each half term for every child. - **See Tapestry policy**

- Keeping up to date with regular communication via Parentmail

### **3. Enabling Environments**

3.1 At Harlowbury Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The role of both the indoor and outdoor environment in learning/organisation of learning provides opportunities for child initiated activities reflecting the topic where they can develop gross motor skills, social skills etc. We provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways. We offer change and challenge within the environment and endeavour to react to children interests in our provision.

3.2 Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have robust policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

3.3 We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.

### **4. Learning and Development**

4.1 At Harlowbury Primary school we attempt to provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the main vehicle for learning.

We plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment

We provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are child- initiated, adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult.

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place.

### **5. Foundation Stage Curriculum**

5.1 We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the prime areas:

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

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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

We support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are;

- Playing and exploring, investigating and experiencing things, being willing to 'have a go'.

- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically - children developing their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for solving problems

Through our planning we aim to provide children with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development. We plan using a series of topics that provide experiences in all seven areas. We then use these to inform our short-term planning informed by our observations and the children's interests.

5.2 We use Read Write Inc. to teach phonics. Children have whole group and then small group sessions daily to ensure a pacey, lively and practical approach to learning to decode and write.

5.3 Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and special interests. In their play, children can be inquisitive, creative, questioning and experimental and will learn at their highest level. Playing with their peers is important for children's development. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.