

Harper Bell SDA Primary School

Early Years Continuous Provision Policy

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Signed by:

Susan Sidhu Headteacher

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Richard Beamish Chair of IEB

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Statement of intent

[Harper Bell SDA Primary School](#) recognises that the physical and emotional environment play an important role in supporting, enabling and extending pupils' learning and development.

This policy outlines our approach to continuous provision within the EYFS, and ensures our practice reflects statutory guidance and supports high-quality, child-centred learning and development.

The policy provides a clear framework for the planning, organisation, and evaluation of continuous provision to ensure that all children can access an enabling environment that supports independence, engagement, and progression across the seven areas of learning.

All early years classrooms will include a broad range of defined learning areas, designed to provide rich opportunities for children to develop key skills, practise knowledge, and explore through play, in both child-led and adult-supported contexts.

Classrooms will be designed to be inclusive, accessible, culturally relevant, and carefully planned to reflect a balance of continuous and enhanced provision.

At all times, children will have access to indoor and outdoor learning environments. Staff will plan provision to ensure that there are a range of learning opportunities available, and that the learning opportunities available in the outdoor environment build on and develop those inside.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Early years foundation stage statutory framework'
- DfE 'Development Matters'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Early Years Policy
- Early Years Teaching and Learning Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring there are appropriate policies, procedures, and practices in place to deliver the '[Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#)' in line with statutory requirements.
- Ensuring the setting has access to an outdoor play area.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the '[Headteachers' standards](#)' and the expectations of the setting community.
- Ensuring adequate facilities are available for outdoor activities which can be planned for and carried out daily.
- Monitoring the impact of provision on outcomes and progress.
- Ensuring early years practice aligns with statutory expectations for curriculum and provision in the EYFS.

The early years leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff members read and implement this policy.

- Ensuring provision and practice is based on the EYFS characteristics of effective teaching and learning in order to maximise opportunities to develop children's independence.
- Leading on vision, design, and quality assurance of continuous provision.
- Supporting the early years team with time to reflect, plan and enhance provision collaboratively.
- Ensuring continuous provision is embedded in long and medium term EYFS planning.
- Ensuring that all learning areas are purposeful, well-resourced, inclusive, and linked to the curriculum intent.
- Conducting regular audits to evaluate the quality and range of provision, and ensure it is refreshed to reflect children's interests and cultural diversity.
- Ensuring that staff are supported to manage and adapt learning areas in response to children's development.

Early years practitioners are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Ensuring that learning resources are rotated, well-maintained, and purposeful.
- Ensuring that learning witnessed in continuous provision areas is captured in learning journeys and assessment records.
- Supporting and promoting children's early education and development in the EYFS.
- Planning, maintaining, and enhancing provision based on observations and assessments.
- Interacting sensitively with children during child-initiated play.
- Helping to maintain safe, accessible, and tidy learning areas.

3. Continuous provision

Continuous provision refers to the resources and opportunities provided in the environment that are always available for children to access during child-initiated play, both indoors and outdoors.

The setting will ensure that these areas are carefully planned to offer children independent access to materials that support the consolidation and extension of prior learning across all areas of the EYFS curriculum.

Staff will ensure that continuous provision enables children to revisit concepts, practise skills, and make choices in their learning – fostering autonomy, creativity, and resilience.

Resources provided will remain consistent over time but will be regularly reviewed and adjusted based on assessment, observation, and children's interests.

When planning, creating and adapting the learning areas the setting will ensure it considers the following principles:

Child-centred:

- Provision will reflect children's current interests, cultural backgrounds, and individual learning styles.
- Practitioners will use formative assessment and sustained observation to identify what children are curious about, incorporating their interests into resources provided.
- Provision will empower children to make autonomous choices, supporting independence and ownership of learning.

Enabling Environments:

- All indoor and outdoor areas will have clearly defined provision zones, established through furniture layout, signage, and organisation, e.g., role play, small world, water, construction, literacy, mathematics, outdoors.
- Resources will be accessible, organised, and adaptable to meet different developmental needs.
- Resources will be clearly labelled with images and words, stored at child height to promote accessibility and independence.
- Learning areas will be inclusive, reflecting diverse family structures, cultures, ethnicities, abilities, and interests.
- Resources will be carefully curated, with a balance of open-ended and structured materials.

Children will be able to make their own selection from a variety of resourced areas, as outlined in the table below:

Area	Resource examples
Role play	Home corner with utensils, dressing-up clothes etc
Construction	Blocks, wooden shapes, figures etc
Small world	Farm animals, dinosaurs, castles etc
Water/ sand area	Buckets, funnels, jugs, scoops etc
Literacy	Mark-making materials, alphabet blocks etc
Outdoors	Bikes, digging tools, climbing equipment etc

Skills-focused:

- Provision will be planned to provide repeated meaningful opportunities to apply and deepen knowledge and skills through self-directed play.
- Materials will be familiar, varied, and promote creativity and independence.
- Resources and prompts will be regularly added and rotated to support specific learning intentions.

Inclusive and accessible:

- Consideration will be made for children with SEND/EAL, with reasonable adjustments made as and where appropriate.
- Where necessary, individual risk assessments will be created for children with additional needs to ensure safe access to all areas of provision.

Responsive and evolving:

- Practitioners will observe and interact purposefully, using assessment to inform and enhance provision.

Adult Role in Continuous Provision

Adults in the setting will be expected to observe sensitively and engage with children to:

- Observe, scaffold, and extend learning.
- Promote vocabulary related to nature, movement, and problem-solving.
- Support children to assess and manage risk independently.
- Use sustained shared thinking to challenge ideas and extend dialogue.

4. Enhanced provision

Enhanced provision refers to temporary or short-term additions to the continuous provision which are intentional, flexible, and support targeted developmental goals. Staff will plan enhancements to the resourced learning areas to:

- Deepen or extend children's learning in a specific area.
- Introduce new concepts, ideas, vocabulary or stimuli.
- Respond to assessment outcomes, observed interests, or curriculum priorities.
- Respond to opportunities for enrichment and challenge.
- Focus on specific learning intentions or curriculum objectives.

Staff will use enhanced provision to act as a bridge between adult-directed teaching and child-initiated learning, helping to reinforce and extend knowledge in meaningful contexts.

Planning for Enhanced Provision

When planning and organising enhancements to continuous provision staff will:

- Use observational assessment to observe trends in children's play, developmental gaps, or emerging fascinations, and use formative assessments to identify what concepts or skills need revisiting or stretching.
- Use the EYFS long-term or medium-term plans to select areas where enhancements can support current objectives.

- Link to prime and specific areas of learning — especially for communication and language, maths, or understanding the world.
- Design enhancements that invite interaction and are engaging, meaningful, and open-ended.
- Consider accessibility for all learners, such as using visual prompts, sensory materials, or dual-language labels as needed.
- Interact alongside enhancements, modelling language, posing questions, and supporting sustained shared thinking.
- Rotate resources [weekly](#) or [fortnightly](#) based on planning cycles, observations, interests, and themes.
- Ensure that each enhancement has a clear learning focus or developmental goal.
- Involve children in suggesting or creating enhancements.
- Ensure that all children, including those with SEND/EAL are able to engage with enhancements meaningfully.
- Use photos and notes to record how children used the enhancement and what learning emerged.

5. Outdoor provision

The setting is aware of the strong links between outdoor learning and increased engagement, wellbeing, and language development.

We recognise outdoor provision as an integral and statutory part of early years education and will ensure that children have access to high-quality outdoor learning daily, in all seasons, as required by the EYFS statutory framework.

Outdoor spaces will reflect and extend all indoor learning areas, offering active, collaborative, and enquiry-based learning opportunities across all seven EYFS areas.

The setting will ensure that outdoor spaces are:

- Well-designed.
- Safe, accessible, and inclusive.
- Open-ended and equipped for exploration, discovery, and imaginative play.

- Continuously available for self-initiated play.
- Reflective of all seven areas of learning, not just physical development.

Independent learning will be encouraged through planned continuous provision where children can make their own selection from a variety of resourced areas, as outlined in the table below:

Area	Key features
Gross Motor Area	Bikes, climbing equipment, tyres, balancing beams
Malleable/Sensory Area	Sandpit, water wall, mud kitchen
Nature/Discovery Zone	Bug hotel, planting beds, weather station
Construction Zone	Planks, crates, guttering, loose parts
Creative Area	Large-scale painting, chalkboards, musical instruments
Storytelling/Quiet Zone	Outdoor library, den space, cushions

Planning and Organisation

When planning and organising outdoor provision, staff will:

- Ensure that outdoor areas are planned with the same intentionality and ambition as indoor spaces.
- Use teaching plans to show how outdoor provision links to curriculum goals, children's interests, and developmental needs.
- Add enhancements in accordance with short- and medium-term learning plans – e.g., themed small worlds in the sandpit, weather experiments, story trails.
- Ensure that the outdoor environment is adaptable across the year, for example using all weather gear, shelters, and rotation of materials to enable year-round use.

- Ensure that outdoor areas are physically accessible for children with mobility needs.
- Encourage outdoor play in most weather conditions unless it is unsafe to do so, e.g. extreme wind, lightning, deep snow.

6. Health and safety

The setting is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and inclusive early years environment that enables all children to play, learn, and thrive. Health and safety procedures will comply with the EYFS statutory framework, relevant DfE guidance, and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

All staff will share responsibility for ensuring that the physical environment – both indoors and outdoors – is safe, clean, and risk-assessed, with procedures in place to protect the welfare of all children, staff, and visitors.

Daily Risk Assessments

Staff will conduct a daily safety check of all indoor and outdoor provision before children arrive. This will include:

- Removing tripping hazards or unsafe materials.
- Checking all electrical equipment is safe and switched off if not in use.
- Ensuring furniture and resources are in good condition and securely stored.
- Confirming exits and fire routes are clear and accessible.
- Verifying that handwashing stations and toilets are clean, stocked, and functioning.

Any issues will be recorded and reported to the EYFS lead or site manager, and the area made safe before use.

Hygiene and Cleaning

- All sand, water, and malleable materials will be covered when not in use and cleaned or replaced regularly.
- Shared resources will be cleaned on a regular schedule using setting hygiene protocols.

Health and Safety Considerations for Outdoor Provision

The setting is committed to providing a safe, stimulating, and well-managed outdoor learning environment for all children. At all times, staff will follow the necessary health and safety procedures to protect both children and staff.

Daily Risk Assessments

A daily visual risk assessment will be completed by the EYFS staff team before children access outdoor areas. This will include:

- Checking for broken or damaged equipment.
- Ensuring surfaces are dry or made safe, e.g. salt in icy weather.
- Removing hazardous objects or litter.
- Checking fencing and gates for security.
- Verifying the presence of all necessary safety equipment, e.g. first aid kit, sun hats, water bottles.

Equipment Maintenance and Site Safety

All fixed equipment, e.g., climbing frames, large play structures will undergo [termly](#) checks by the site manager and [annual](#) inspections by a qualified contractor.

Loose parts play materials, such as tyres, crates, planks, etc will be inspected [weekly](#) for splinters, sharp edges, or deterioration.

Tools used in the outdoor learning areas will be stored securely, used under adult supervision, and checked before and after use.

Any issues will be recorded and reported to the EYFS lead or site manager, and the area made safe before use.

Weather Preparedness and Clothing

Staff will ensure that:

- Children are appropriately dressed for weather conditions, e.g. raincoats, waterproof trousers, sunhats, or warm layers as needed.
- Appropriate specialist/ spare clothing is readily available for wet or muddy play.

- Shaded areas or pop-up shelters are available for shelter from the changing weather conditions, i.e. sun, rain.
- Measures regarding sun safety and hydration are modelled and implemented, as per the Early Years Policy requirements, such as:
 - The wearing of sun hats.
 - Providing access to water/ water bottles.
 - Application of sun cream, with parental consent.

Any accidents or near-misses will be reported in line with the setting's Health and Safety Policy and safeguarding procedures.

Supervision and Staffing

The setting will ensure that supervision ratios meet or exceed those required indoors, as outlined in the EYFS Statutory Framework.

Staff will position themselves appropriately, so they are able to monitor all areas of the outdoor environment, including hidden or quiet zones.

A qualified paediatric first aider will always be present during outdoor activities.

Walkie-talkies or internal phones will be used for quick communication with the main building in case of emergency, where appropriate and necessary.

7. Inclusion

All children are valued as individuals, irrespective of any protected characteristics, in line with the Equality Act 2010. The Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will ensure that the needs of all children are met, regardless of their protected characteristics.

The EYFS curriculum and learning environment will be planned and organised to meet the needs of each individual child and support them at their own pace.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy will ensure all children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible. SEND in the EYFS setting will be monitored and managed by the setting SENCO.

8. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the early years leader, headteacher and governing board on an [annual](#) basis. In the event of any updates or changes in legislation, the setting will ensure that the policy is reviewed and amended as appropriate to comply with any changes to its statutory responsibilities.

The next scheduled review date of this policy is [date](#).

Any changes to this policy will be communicated to parents and staff members, who can request a copy of the policy from [the setting office](#).

Continuous provision will be reviewed termly and included in the EYFS self-evaluation.

Regular learning walks, environment audits, and child voice activities will inform improvements.

CPD and reflective discussions will be scheduled to support practice development.