



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



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## **Aims:**

At Holywell Primary School we have an aim to ensure all children become ready, respectful, responsible and resilient pupils. In the EYFS at Holywell Primary School we aim to ensure all children have a positive and meaningful start to their education, enabling children to build the foundations they require to become the independent learners and thinkers. We are a rights respecting school and ensure what we deliver in the school is adhere to the UN's Convention on the Right of the Child. A part of our whole school vision, we work towards the following articles:

- **Article 3** - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect them
- **Article 13** - Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information
- **Article 28** - Every child has the right to an education
- **Article 29** - Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full
- **Article 31** - Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities

At Holywell Primary School we recognise the importance of the UN rights of a child 'Article 31' that learning through play is fundamental in our Early Years Curriculum, ensuring children have opportunities to initiate their own learning through the use of continuous provision. We aim to provide children with stimulating, active play experiences that children are freely able to access and begin to explore and develop an understanding, helping them to make sense of the world. When children are in continuous provision they become explorers and begin to make discoveries in their play when they begin to think critically and reflect on the choices they make. Through added enhancements in the provision children have the opportunity to practice and consolidate their skills in an independent manor and at their own pace. Through the use of continuous provision children are able to become risk takers, creative, independent and resilient learners, when able to choose their own learning. To ensure our children's learning is extended and challenged appropriately we ensure our adults take an active role in the provision where the children's play is observed, being modelled and facilitated.

## **The Early Years Curriculum:**

In Reception we follow the curriculum which is underpinned by the Early Years Foundation Stage document and clearly outlines what we teach to ensure the children have the opportunities to learn and succeed.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1170108/EYFS\\_framework\\_from\\_September\\_2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1170108/EYFS_framework_from_September_2023.pdf)

### **Structure of the EYFS:**

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth across to the end of the reception year. At Holywell our Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 4 to 5 years. Our reception class has a full-time teacher and two full-time teaching assistants to ensure best practice. Our classroom has an outdoor classroom, enabling children to learn both inside and outside whilst also having opportunities in the school's forest school once a week.

### **Curriculum:**

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum which is outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework, which was updated in 2023. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development, which are all equally important and inter-connected. There are there 3 areas, within these 7 areas which are classed as prime areas that are particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive.

The Prime Areas:

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

The Prime Areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific area:

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

### **Characteristics of Effective Learning:**

The EYFS include the characteristics of effective teaching and learning (CoEL). Activities are then planned and tailored to meet these accordingly. The CoEL highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics are:

**Playing and Exploring-** Children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

**Active Learning-** Children concentrate and keep on trying things if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.

**Creating and Thinking Critically-** Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### **Planning:**

At Holywell activities and experiences are planned to ensure children have the opportunities to develop and learn effectively. Our planning consists of daily maths which follows the White Rose scheme, one or two daily Teacher Directed activities, a daily phonics activity and then a weekly continuous provision plan for both the indoor and outdoor environment. Our Phonics plan follows the Little Wandle scheme which supports children in growing to become confident readers who will enjoy reading for pleasure. In Reception we have PE once a week, following the Greenacre Sports Partnership scheme. It is important when we plan that our plans are tailored to also meet the children's individual needs, interests and stages of development. Our long-term plan is underpinned by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. We then map out topics and our Medium-term planning is then created which considers the children's learning and development needs. Our staff within our Early Years Foundation stage are continually observing the children when they are learning through play and interacting with the children, observing, assessing and responding to what the children need to further their learning.

### **Teaching:**

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and a through a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated activities known as enhancements within the provision. We ensure that activities are planned for both the indoor and outdoor classroom and children have a weekly opportunity to attend Forest School with the school's Forest School leader. During Teacher Directed sessions, children are taught in a variety of ways through whole class carpet inputs, mixed ability groups and ability groups to provide a range of learning experiences. During continuous provision children are able to initiate their own learning and have enhancements which have been planned to extend and consolidate learning.

### **Play:**

Learning through play is a fundamental approach to teaching and learning within EYFS and aligns with the UN conventions of a child 'Article 31' of every child having the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities and 'Article 28' where every child has the right to an education. Play is at the heart of Early Years and is why we ensure our children are provided with activities and experiences that will inspire them to learn. Through play, children develop language skills, their emotions and creativity and social skills, this is why we ensure children have an enabling learning environment which has stimulating resources which are open-ended and able to be freely accessed to the children.

Our adults take an active role in continuous provision ensuring children are being effectively observed, having play modelled, facilitated and opportunities for children's play to be extending through skills and language.

### **Enabling Environments:**

At Holywell our early years environments play a significant role in supporting and extending the learning of a child's development. Our classroom set up in an organised manner which allows children to explore and learn safely and securely. Resources are open-ended for the children and resources are displayed on open-shelving with labels to support children in choosing the learning they wish to complete. The classroom inside and outside are divided into clear learning areas, these areas are:

- Construction area
- Reading area
- Maths area
- Mark Making area
- Investigation area
- Role play area
- Creative area
- Small world area/ loose parts
- Fine Motor area
- Outdoor construction area
- Music area
- Sand area
- Water area

**Here are some examples of some of the areas within the inside classroom:**





## **Assessment:**

In EYFS assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes which is undertaken in early years. We believe it is fundamental to get to know our children to help find out about the children to enable us to support them accordingly to their level of need. Over a two-week period, our reception class has daily focus children where our practitioners will work closely alongside these children making observations on the children during continuous provision. During continuous provision it is also important to capture any 'wow moments' from all of the children which show any significant achievements, ensuring these crucial moments are not missed. Observations are carried out through the use of the 'Tapestry' app which is built up of an observation by the practitioner, pictures and highlighting skills which the children have used during their play. These observations help for the practitioners to plan next steps and further the children's learning accordingly. Children in reception have their own learning journal book and folder which we capture both teacher directed activities and child-initiated activities that are completed within continuous provision.

Within the first 6 weeks of a child starting reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). Throughout the year, children's phonics, maths and literacy are assessed weekly and each term ensuring the children's needs are met where any gaps are found through the use of interventions. Assessments against all areas in the EYFS framework are also carried out three times a year on 'Insight'.

At the end of the EYFS, we complete an EYFS profile for each child. This is an assessment to assess the children against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels (emerging)

## **Working with Parents:**

We recognise the importance of building positive relationships with parents as highlighted by the EYFS framework. It is important to build a positive partnership between the school and home to build a positive impact on children's learning and development. Parents are updated with their child's achievement and progress through the use of 'Tapestry' where they can see the observations which have been made and any events or key experiences the children have completed throughout the year. We also believe it is important for parents to share key moments they experience at home of the child, which is a great starting point for children to build their communication and language and discuss this with their peers. To ensure parents are able to have opportunities to speak with the class teacher, the class teacher will be on the playground each day when dismissing the children to give parents the opportunity to have informal conversations about their child with the teacher.

Parents/ Carers are also kept up to date with their child's progress and development through parent consultations which will take place twice a year, where teachers are able to discuss with parents the child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

The child's key person will be the class teacher who will ensure their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person (teacher) is there to help support parents/ carers in guiding their child's development at home and supporting families in specialist support where appropriate.

### **Health and Safety & Safeguarding:**

Within early years as part of the prime area 'Personal Social and Emotional Development' we ensure children are educated and well informed about making healthy lifestyle choices so they are aware about healthy eating and the effects of eating too much sugar, importance of brushing your teeth, regular exercise and having a good night's sleep.

The rest of our safeguarding and health and safety procedures are outlined in our schools safeguarding policy.