



Hayes Meadow Primary School Foundation Stage policy

Aim

At Hayes Meadow, 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 pride ourselves on providing a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents, families and other professionals to meet their individual needs and help every child to achieve what they are capable of. "When we give every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow." Development Matters July 2021

Our high expectations will enable children to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve what they are capable of. We will ensure that all our children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start in Key Stage 1.

The Nursery, Preschool and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the EYFS document. The EYFS is based on **seven key features** of effective practice as set out in Development Matters 2021

1. The best for every child
2. High-quality care
3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn
4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6. Self-regulation and executive function
7. Partnership with parents

As part of our best practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- Provide early intervention for those who need additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and where needed outside agencies
- Plan challenging learning experiences for all our children, based on the individual needs of the child
- Provide opportunities for our children to engage in adult led learning and self-initiated learning
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors
- Plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning

Curriculum

In our Preschool, Nursery class and Reception class, we follow the Early Year's Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS). The EYFS curriculum underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's learning. This curriculum is made up of seven areas of learning and development and three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

The Prime Areas of Learning are:

- Communication and Language (CL)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

The Specific Areas of Learning are:

- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)

- Understanding the World (UW)
- Expressive arts and design (EAD)

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning are:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

All these areas of learning and development depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. All the areas will be delivered through planned, purposeful play with a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities.

Staffing

Hayes Meadow has one reception class, with 30 children, one teacher (QTS) and one full time Teaching Assistant. One preschool class with 26 children, one teacher (QTS) and one full time Teacher Assistant. One Nursery class with 20 children, with one Nursery leader and three Teaching Assistants.

Hayes Meadows staffing ratios within EYFS classes are in accordance with the EYFS Framework.

Teaching

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively, share their ideas, develop their vocabulary and become active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

In Nursery, Preschool and Reception, we have carefully planned the progression of skills and knowledge through our curriculum overviews based on half termly units of learning. Each unit of learning offers experiences, opportunities and the development of key knowledge in all seven areas. We also follow the children's interests where appropriate. These curriculum overviews are reviewed by the Phase leader and Head teacher. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Staff working in Nursery will complete the progress check at two, between the child's second and third birthday. We will consider the following factors when determining the timings of the progress check.

- When the child started in our setting.
- Individual needs and circumstances.
- Pattern of attendance.

The check has three main purposes

- Partnership with parents. Working together practitioners, other professionals and parents can support children's development and wellbeing individually.
- Action for every child. Practitioners need to listen to the child, talk with other and then plan together.
- Early identification. Some children need extra help for a while as they grow and develop.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will move towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through EYFS at Hayes Meadow and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole class and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session, teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing. All children complete at least one piece of mark making and one maths learning opportunity each week as part of our Early Years Non-negotiables.

Our curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

'Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way.'

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 question, stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice recognizing their development is like a spider's web with many strands, not a straight line.

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out everyday. A well-planned learning environment, indoors and outside, is an important aspect of pedagogy. Children are asked to have wellington boots and coats in school at all times to enable them to use our outdoor areas in all weathers.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- Assessments are made in line with the EYFS July 21. Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence.
- At the start of the reception year, a short assessment RBA (Reception Baseline Assessment) is taken in the first six weeks.
- Daily practice includes observations of children's development and progress.
- Discussions are held with all adults in EYFS about individual children's development and next steps
- Significant observations of children's achievements are recorded in their learning journeys which are shared with parents
- Assessment should not take our practitioners away from the children for long periods of time.
- An end of year report is provided to all parents/carers on their child's development against the seven areas of learning
- At the end of Reception children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals for each area of learning. Children will be awarded 'expected' (1) or 'emerging' (2) given by using a 'best fit' model. This profile will be shared with parents.

Partnerships with parents

- We feel that it is important that we have strong and respectful partnerships with our parents/carers. This sets the scene for children to thrive in the early years.
- We ensure that all our EYFS staff listen regularly to parents/carers and give parents/carers clear information about their children's progress.
- We offer family support through our SENDCo Mrs Morgan and Head teacher Mrs Sivieri.
- We actively encourage all parents/carers to chat, play and read with their children through planned activities, our rainbow reader scheme and themed events.
- We share information with parents about the new Early Years Nutrition Guidance (DfE, 2025) and support families with advice on healthy packed lunches. We communicate clearly with families about cultural/religious diets, allergies, and food brought from home, including packed lunches. Families are signposted to schemes such as Free School Meals and Healthy Start where eligible.

Transition

Parents and children are sent an induction pack in the term prior to their child starting in Nursery and in the summer term for both the Preschool class and Reception class to prepare for them for a smooth transition. The children take part in many different transition activities during the summer term to

ensure that all moves are as positive as possible. Also, during the summer term in Reception, 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.

Health and Safety and Safeguarding

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 the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance and adhere to our separate safeguarding policy.

The DSL is Mrs Sivieri. The DDSLs are Mrs Morgan and Mrs Gilbert.

We are a healthy school and participate in the free fruit and milk for under-fives scheme. For our Reception children we provide the universal infant free school meal and the menu is regularly monitored with the chef. We cater for those children who have special dietary requirements, food allergies and have robust systems in place ensuring that all children receive the correct meal.

Fresh water is readily available for all children and we encourage children to bring in water bottles with water only.

Children are taught the importance of keeping clean and washing their hands correctly.

We promote good oral health and are part of the Staffordshire Tooth Brushing programme.

Paediatric First Aid requirements

In line with the statutory framework, there is always at least one member of staff who is paediatrically first aid trained on site and available when the children are present and on outings.

Eating and Nutrition

In line with the revised EYFS framework (September 2025), Hayes Meadow has adopted the Department for Education's *Early Years Foundation Stage: Food and Nutrition Guidance*. We ensure that:

- **Supervision:** At least one member of staff with a current Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate is present during all mealtimes. Children are always supervised while eating and are seated appropriately. Staff remain within sight and hearing, ideally sitting/standing opposite children.
- **Dietary Information:** Comprehensive information on allergies, intolerances, and cultural or religious dietary needs is collected prior to a child starting. This information is shared with all relevant staff and regularly reviewed. Individual Healthcare Plans (IHCPs) and allergy action plans are implemented where necessary.
- **Choking Prevention:** Food is prepared in line with choking-risk guidance (e.g. cutting grapes lengthways, avoiding whole nuts). All choking or near-miss incidents are recorded, parents are informed, and patterns are monitored as part of safeguarding practice.
- **Food Standards:** Meals and snacks are healthy, balanced, and nutritious. Our menus follow the "Provide, Limit, Avoid" approach recommended in statutory guidance:
 - Provide: fruit, vegetables, wholegrains, pulses, lean proteins, dairy or fortified alternatives, oily fish every three weeks.
 - Limit: foods high in sugar, salt, and saturated fat.
 - Avoid: foods that present a high choking risk or have minimal nutritional value.
- **Drinks:** Only water and milk are provided, with fresh water available throughout the day.

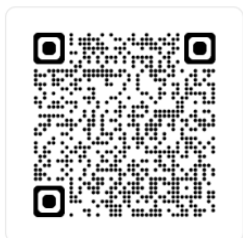
We ensure that children's dietary needs linked to cultural, religious, or medical requirements are fully respected and provided for. Menus are adapted where necessary, and staff are trained to understand allergy management and inclusive nutrition practices.

Parent/carers are required to provide the school with details of any special requirement, preferences and **food allergies** and any special health requirement, where applicable. This information is recorded, shared with all staff and acted upon. All staff have completed allergy and anaphylaxis training.

Please see our healthy lunch box advice on portion size and nutrition.

Safer sleeping

Where children require rest or sleep during the day, they will rest on individual sleep mats in a safe, comfortable and well-supervised environment in accordance with the EYFS statutory framework and current safer sleep guidance from the NHS and Lullaby Trust. A member of staff remains with sleeping children at all times to provide continuous supervision and monitor their wellbeing throughout the sleep period. The length of each child's sleep is recorded and shared with parents/carers as appropriate. Full details of our safe sleep procedures, including our risk assessments and monitoring arrangements, are set out in the school's separate **Safer Sleeping Policy**.



[Help for early years providers : Safer sleep](#)

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Hayes Meadow irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies. See our separate policies on SEND.

Empowering Learning

As a school we have introduced our six Learning Behaviours through characters to the children. Children in Nursery and Reception will be encouraged to recognise when they are being; Team Workers, Reflective Learners, Effective Participators, Self Managers, Resourceful Thinkers, Independent Enquirers. The six areas of empowering learning can be seen as the 'Learn to Learn' skills. They will also be supported to develop their Oracy skills through daily reading, discussions, games and planned activities.

Behaviour

School expectations of behaviour are consistent throughout the different learning areas and pupils are aware of these. Please see our separate behaviour policy.

Use of Whole School Resources

The Reception and Preschool class use the hall for dance, drama, physical education and assemblies.
Use of outside field and playground.
The Forest School area and the rest of the Wild area.
IPad trolley for use in classrooms. Music room. Sensory/Nurture room.
The Hub for pupils with the most complex SEND needs.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the phase leader/Assistant Head teacher, governing body and the Head teacher. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff. All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all

processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction and ongoing CPD.

Information and records

Information is stored in line with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to the school's Data Protection Policy.

Policy last updated September 2026

Review date September 2027