



# Hemingford Grey SCHOOL

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## **EARLY YEARS/FOUNDATION STAGE**

Date policy was last reviewed and approved: **September 2018**

## **Hemingford Grey Primary School Early Years Policy**

Early Years is the foundation upon which children develop and build a curiosity and love for learning. The Early Years aim to develop the whole child in an environment which nurtures, encourages and fosters in children an early understanding of what learning is and how to be a good learner. In this policy the Early Years refers to children under the age of 5 and all children in the Foundation Stage year. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of Early Years education at our school.

### **Our aims for children in the Foundation Stage year at Hemingford Grey Primary School**

- To provide a purposeful learning environment which enables all the children's learning needs to be met and where the children feel happy and secure.
- To provide an environment which encourages the skills of investigation and questioning without the fear of failure.
- For each child to develop a growing sense of their own self-image and worth
- To provide opportunities for children to develop socially, emotionally, physically and academically.
- To be inclusive and provide equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender or disability.
- To ensure an approach which reflects the diverse society in which we live.
- To provide an active learning environment where sound basic skills and concepts are developed and the foundations laid for the National Curriculum.
- To provide the opportunities for children to develop their independence in readiness for the next stage of their school life.

In order to achieve these aims we need to take into account that young children differ from each other in personal characteristics, levels of maturity, intellectual development, range of experience and in the ability to cope in social situations. Every child is individual and unique.

Initially, most of their learning will be child-led and so we plan and organise a rich and varied environment whereby the children will develop positive attitudes to their learning and build on their understanding of the world and their place in it. This is supported through the child's first-hand experience using purposeful play and real life situations. Through independent busy learning, children are able to develop at their own pace and practise skills which they will be able to apply to their lifelong learning.

## **Parental Involvement**

Relationships between home and school are vital. Children will benefit from good communication between parents and school where information, experience and expertise are shared in order to increase understanding of the child and their education. At Hemingford Grey Primary School, we endeavour to make parents feel welcome and form a good relationship with staff. The parents are invited to access Seesaw, an electronic learning journey, which enables them to see and comment on their child's learning. They are also invited into school on numerous occasions to attend a Reading and Phonics Workshop, Sports Day, Coffee Mornings, Come to Lunch, Class Celebrations, Open Afternoons and Come to Learn to name but a few. Parents are also given the opportunity to help inside and outside of the classrooms. We welcome and value parents' involvement in their child's education and the smooth transition from home to school.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is the first stage of a child's education, focusing on the distinct needs of children from birth to the end of the Foundation Stage year at school. The curriculum during this time underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's development in the three prime areas

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

And the four specific areas

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

Each area of the curriculum listed above has Early Learning Goals. They set out the skills, understanding, knowledge and attitudes which the children will strive to achieve and even exceed. Children will work at different stages of progress towards these goals, depending on their age and stage of development.

During the first half term, an 'on entry' baseline assessment of each child is conducted through observation and discussion. This assessment forms a basis for planning and future learning.

The child is monitored during the year through observation, discussion and specific planned activities thus ensuring that the learning they engage in is inspiring, exciting and supports their development. Ongoing formative assessments are completed by the Foundation Stage team, which give a clear picture of where a child is achieving, their next steps and where they may need support.

## **The Foundation Stage Profile**

Throughout the Foundation Stage, as part of the teaching and learning process, teachers need to assess each child's development in relation to the Early Learning Goals that form part of the 'Development Matters' document. These assessments are made on the basis of the team's accumulating observations and knowledge of the whole child. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the teacher will assess each child against each of the Early Learning Goals. Children are either assessed as 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' in relation to the goal. These assessments will form the basis for reports to parents and for information to be passed on to the child's next teacher. Reporting a child's progress to his or her parents/carers is a key requirement. This report, based on observation, will ensure that every child leaves the Foundation Stage with their strengths acknowledged and celebrated and their needs and next steps in their learning clearly identified.

## **Entry into School**

In order for children to settle positively into Foundation Stage, during the Summer Term, the Foundation Stage team communicate with Early Years settings. We work closely with these settings to ensure a positive transition of their pupils into school. The children spend sessions in the Foundation Stage classrooms and parents are invited into school to meet the Headteacher and Foundation Stage team. Parents and children are also invited into school for an information session and a school lunch

During the first few weeks of the Autumn Term, each child is offered a Home Visit, which gives the child's teacher an opportunity to meet with the child and their parents at home. The children then begin school the following morning where they attend school part time until every child has had their home visit staying until just after lunch. The youngest children begin school in the first instance and this gives them an opportunity to settle into school in smaller groups.

We aim to offer all children full time education within the first three weeks of the new school term.

## **Admission and Entry Procedures**

Parents are requested to complete an admissions form concerning home/family circumstances and medical details. A pack, which parents receive, contains a wide range of information including school uniform details, the school's Behaviour Policy and medical information. The packs are given out during the parents' visits during the second half of the Summer Term.

## **Special Educational Needs Admissions Policy**

The currently agreed Admissions Policy of the governors makes no distinction as to pupils with Special Educational Needs. Within the Admissions Policy,

the aim of the school is to meet the needs of the child of any parents who wishes to register at the school. In the case of pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), the Inclusion Manager/Headteacher will work closely with the Local Authority named officer in coming to a decision about the most appropriate provision for the pupil. No pupil can be refused admission solely on the grounds that he/she has Special Educational Needs. Hemingford Grey Primary School promotes an ethos of inclusion and the school has clear guidelines which it adheres to.

The Inclusion Manager will work closely with the feeder Early Years settings in coming to a decision about the most appropriate provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs. The Inclusion Manager will work with all appropriate external agencies to support transition.

### **Parent Partnerships**

Hemingford Grey Primary School values working in partnership with parents. We will seek to involve parents in all decisions about their child and their views will be sought at all stages of assessment and provision. Together parents and teachers can build a far more holistic view of a child and their needs than can be done separately. The school will keep records of all who are parents/carers and those who have responsibility for each child. We will seek to involve all parents/carers in decisions about their child, but recognise that this may require sensitive handling.

At Hemingford Grey Primary School, we feel that the child's first year of school is one of the most important in his/her education. Our aim is to promote a happy, safe and secure learning environment where children feel valued and enjoy being there.