



Hemingford Grey SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS/FOUNDATION STAGE

Date policy was last reviewed and approved: **May 2014**

Hemingford Grey Primary School Early Years Policy

Transplanting children from home to school is very like transplanting seedlings from a seed tray out into the garden: timing is crucial and conditions must be right for them to grow ahead without any setbacks.

(Transition from Home- School P.P.A. Survey)

Early years' education is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives and is an education that encompasses all learning. Early years' education is concerned with physical, social, emotional, aesthetic and intellectual development of the individual child, with no one area standing in isolation from the others. In this policy the early years' education 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 an environment which is stimulating 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 intellectually.
- To be inclusive and provide equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender or disability.
- To ensure an approach which reflects the multicultural society in which we live.
- To provide an active learning environment where sound basis skills and concepts are developed and the foundations laid for National Curriculum work.
- To provide the opportunities for children to do things for themselves therefore encouraging independence.

In order to achieve these aims we need to take into account that 4 year olds differ from each other in personal characteristics, levels of maturity, intellectual development, range of experience and in the ability to cope in social situations. There is no such thing as a typical four year old.

Initially, most of their learning will be individual and so we aim to organise a rich and varied environment whereby the children can develop positive attitudes to their learning and extend their understanding of the world and their place in it. This is best done through the child's first hand experience using play and real life situations. Through play, children are able to develop

at their own pace and practice skills which are needed later when faced with a more formal curriculum.

Parental Involvement

Relationships between home and school are critical in children's experience. 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. Parents are invited into school, before their child begins school, to attend a Reading and Phonics Workshop, Sports Day, Coffee Mornings, school lunch and meetings with the Head Teacher and staff. 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 the national curriculum focusing on the distinct needs of children from birth to the end of the Foundation Stage year at school. The curriculum during this time should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's development in the 3 Prime areas

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

And the 4 specific areas

- Mathematics
- Literacy
- Understanding the World
- Creative Development

Each area of the curriculum listed above has an Early Learning Goal. They set out the skills, understanding, knowledge and attitudes which it is hoped children will reach and or exceed by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children will work at different stages of progress towards these goals, depending on their age and stage of development. Each area of development has stepped stages towards the Early Learning Goal which are split into age phases.

During the first half term, an 'on entry' initial 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 simple tasks, thus ensuring that the activities they undertake match their developing abilities. Ongoing formative assessments are completed by the

Foundation Stage teacher, 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 teacher'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

If the transition from home to school is to be smooth we need to ensure that changes and introductions of new experiences are gradual rather than sudden. During the Summer Term, the class teacher and Foundation Stage Co-ordinator visit the early years' settings. We aim to work closely with these settings to ensure a smooth transition of their pupils into school. The children spend afternoon sessions in the Foundation Stage classrooms and parents are invited into school to meet the Head Teacher and classroom teachers. Parents and children are also invited into school for an information session, a school lunch and a range of other school activities including a Reading and Phonics Workshop. A drop-in session is available for parents to ask any additional questions they may have.

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 for the first few weeks, 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.

When all of the children are in school part time and staying for lunch and then in the following week, all children attend school full time. 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 circumstance 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' afternoon 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 a statement of special educational needs, the S.E.N.D. Co-ordinator/Head Teacher will work closely with the L.E.A. named offices 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 S.E.N. D. Co-ordinator 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 Special Needs Co-ordinator will work with the Health Visitors, the Under Five's team, local early years' settings, physiotherapist, social worker and Family Centre.

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 complete picture 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. When this involves adults in more than one household, we will deal directly with the parent/carer who has day-to-day responsibility for the pupil.

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.