Great Massingham & Harpley CofE Primary Schools Federation

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EYFS Policy

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Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year when children are five years old.

The EYFS is based upon four themes:

- Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Great Massingham and Harpley C of E Primary Schools we believe it is important to provide an early years education that aims to meet the individual needs of very child in our care. We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.
Children are made to feel safe and secure and are valued as individuals. We aim to make their first experiences of school a happy, positive and enjoyable time.

Inclusion

All children and families are valued at our schools. Children are treated as individuals and all children are encouraged to achieve their personal best. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with additional needs, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those with English as an Additional Language (EAL).
Early identification of any additional need is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Any concerns are always discussed with the parents/carers at an early stage and the school SENDCo is called upon for any further information and advice.

Welfare

It is important to us all that all children in school are safe. We aim to educate the children about boundaries and expectations and to help them to understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this life skill. Children are supported to recognise and take risks and learn to avoid hazards within a safe environment.

At Great Massingham and Harpley C of E Schools Federation we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' and so we:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of children.

Positive Relationships

All children are allocated a key person during their time in the reception year.
A key person is:

- A named member of staff who has more contact than others with the child
- Someone to build relationships with the child and their parents/carers
- Someone who helps the child become familiar with the provision
- Someone who meets children's individual needs
- Someone who responds sensitively to children's feelings, ideas and behaviour

The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Developing a positive relationship and secure attachment with their key person enables children to feel safe and have their emotional needs supported, thereby helping them to become confident, capable and independent learners.
In reception the key person role is shared between the HLTA and the class teachers.

Parents as Partners and children's induction to school

We recognise that parents/carers are each child's first and foremost educators and we work to develop strong links with them. We value being partners with them in their child's education and in order to make their children's early experiences of Great Massingham and Harpley C of E Primary Schools as secure and happy as possible, the following takes place each year:

- Inviting all parents/carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Offering home visits prior to the child starting school.
- Offering children the opportunity to spend time in school before officially starting.
- Regularly sharing the children's 'Learning Journeys' with parents/carers and valuing the ongoing contributions to these from parents/carers.
- Offering parents/carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress – there is a formal meeting each term at which the teacher and the parents discuss the child's progress and parents receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Offering an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns.
- Having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parent/carers to become secure and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances.
- Arranging for children to start school with a gradual induction programme. Initially, all children attend school on a part-time basis for a few days, attending the morning session only. During the second week the children attend on a full-time basis. We encourage parents/carers to bring their children into the classroom and settle them. If there are difficulties with a child's admission an individual programme of induction can be arranged.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourages collaboration between children, school and parents/carers, including phonics and numeracy workshops.
- Setting homework tasks that parents/carers can help with.
- Welcoming parents/carers who are able to give up some of their time to help with activities during school time, although we acknowledge that this is not an option for some parents/carers due to work and family commitments.
- Inviting pre-school children aged 3+ to play sessions throughout the year.
- Inviting families to the summer term sports day prior to starting school.

- Inviting parents/carers of new Yr R children to a meeting in the summer term to allow them an opportunity to meet school staff and to provide them with information regarding the EYFS and school life at Harpley/Great Massingham..
- Inviting new YR pupils to attend taster sessions in school to familiarise them with staff, peers and the layout of the school.

Enabling Environments

Accommodation
We aim to create an attractive and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment where children can feel confident, secure and challenged.
At Great Massingham and Harpley the reception children share a classroom with the KS1 children. The classrooms are thoughtfully set out with clearly defined areas for structured play and direct access to outdoors.

Staff
The reception children have a full-time TA designated as YR key worker, who works alongside the foundation stage teachers. Appropriate training is given to staff ensuring that the children benefit from all adult input.

Resources
Resources within the classroom are well ordered and accessible to all children, helping to promote independence and the children taking responsibility for their own learning. We plan an indoor and outdoor learning environment that encourages a positive attitude towards learning.

Observation, assessment and planning
Effective learning builds upon and extends prior learning, following children's interests and needs. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children and by carrying out observations we ensure that we identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning.
The Development Matters in the EYFS inform how planning objectives are set.

We make an initial Baseline Assessment during the first half of the Autumn term. After this, we make regular assessments of the children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Our assessments are made on the basis of our accumulating observations and knowledge of the whole child and at the end of the reception year the Foundation Stage Profile sums up that knowledge. In reception the profile is completed throughout the year to track individual achievements. Assessments against the 17 Early Learning Goals are finalised during the summer term, summarising each child's development. The Foundation Stage Profile forms the basis for the report that is shared with parents/carers at the end of the reception year and informs them whether their child is meeting expected levels of development, exceeding expected levels of development, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape the educational provision within the EYFS.

All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn and form relationships.
The three prime areas are:

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

The three prime areas are strengthened through four specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Knowledge of the world
- Expressive arts and design

The Early Learning Goals in the prime areas are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Self confidence and self awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour
- Making relationships

Communication and Language

- Listening and attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

Physical Development

- Moving and handling
- Health and self care

The Early Learning Goals in the specific areas are:

Literacy

- Reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Numbers
- Shape, space and measure

Understanding the world

- People and communities
- The world
- Technology

Expressive arts and designs

- Exploring and using media and materials

- Being imaginative

There are three identified Characteristics of Effective Learning which are based around children's attitudes towards learning, their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. Teachers observe children with these characteristics in mind and assess the level at which they are able to demonstrate these characteristics. These assessments are considered when planning future activities and experiences. The three characteristics are

Playing and Exploring (Engagement)

- Finding out and exploring
- Play with what they know
- Being willing to have a go.

Active Learning (Motivation)

- Being involved and concentration
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achievement

Creating and thinking critically (Thinking)

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

We deliver purposeful play activities and learning experiences through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

"Children's play reflects their wide-ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level."

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.