



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

September 2018

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Our Aims

The Early Years Foundation Stage includes all children from 3-5 years old in our Nursery (Haseltine only) and Reception classes (Haseltine and Fairlawn). In the Fairlawn and Haseltine Federation we see the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as a fundamental basis for the rest of the children's schooling. We believe that children are active learners who will discover new things through investigation, listening, social interactions, questioning and exploration.

In the Fairlawn and Haseltine Federation we strive to:

- Ensure a safe, challenging, stimulating and caring environment which is sensitive to the needs of all children, including children with additional needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced and creative curriculum that will provide firm foundations for learning and development.
- Plan experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Value and build upon what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and supporting each child to progress.
- Foster independence, collaborative skills and self-confidence.
- Build partnerships with parents/carers and value their contributions.
- Ensure that all children feel valued, respected and included and that classroom resources and activities reflect the culture and language of their homes.
- Promote Fairlawn's and Haseltine's Core Values in all aspects of learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

In our federation we are committed to underpinning our provision with the four themes of the EYFS:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

1. A Unique Child

In our federation we believe that every child is a learner who can be resilient, capable and full of self-belief. We acknowledge that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates, but endeavour to provide a safe environment that will meet the needs of each child personally. Children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender or abilities. We welcome all children and families into our settings so that they feel included, safe and valued.

The "characteristics of effective learning" support the children to become motivated and effective learners. Children will *play and explore* when using all available resources, which will in turn allow them to build on experiences and develop new ones. As *active learners*, children will begin to learn from their mistakes and become more resilient when trying things for the first time. They will also make links, explore their ideas and discover their own strategies for problem solving when *creating and thinking critically*. Practitioners will support the children in developing all of these characteristics through playing and learning alongside children and, where necessary, scaffolding and supporting them to extend their ideas.

2. Positive Relationships

In our federation we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We recognise that parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educator. We believe that when parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We aim to develop this by:

- Arranging home visits for new children at their point of entry, either in Nursery or Reception
- Organising a starting school meeting for all new starters, with additional transition meetings if needed
- Transition booklets for children starting Reception where necessary.
- Operating an open door policy, where staff are approachable and parents are able to communicate with staff as and when they need to, sharing concerns or asking questions at the beginning or the end of the day.
- Inviting parents/carers to assemblies and other school events
- Sending home weekly (Haseltine) or termly (Fairlawn) learning letters to keep parents informed of their child's current theme/topic and the key learning taking place, as well as any support or learning that could take place at home.
- Sharing children's progress at school through learning journeys, reading records and annotated writing folders. This is a reciprocal process and parents are invited to share their child's successes with the school.
- Opening up our classrooms for parents to come and take part in specific learning activities with their child.
- Providing introductory sessions to provide parents with a deeper understanding of our teaching methods for Phonics or Numeracy.
- Sharing children's progress and discussing individual targets during parents' evening in October and February.
- Providing an annual written report to parents/carers.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. The EYFS classes have a full time teacher and learning support assistant (LSA). Staff will work with each child either on a one to one basis, in a small group or as part of a larger group. We understand that children need to develop strong relationships to support their emotional well-being and to feel safe, confident and happy, which will help them to become independent learners.

3. Enabling Environments

In our federation, we recognise the importance of a rich learning environment both inside and outside. The classrooms are organised into learning areas (see learning and development). Teachers and LSAs will plan activities for the tables and outside area, but the children are also able to locate and select equipment and resources independently. The Reception and Nursery (Haseltine) each have their own outdoor area, separate from the rest of the school and they are able to select learning activities either inside or outside throughout most of the day. We recognise that being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop language skills and be physically active. As well as planned activities, the children will initiate spontaneous activities and naturally occurring opportunities will be utilised, for example, learning linked to seasons, the weather and nature.

The Reception children are given the opportunity to 'visit' the other classroom and take part in learning activities in there. The environments will be designed to reflect the topic and learning taking place, but will vary from one classroom to the next. To ensure that we meet the individual needs of all of our children we make regular observations of the children's interactions, interests, skills, and development of concepts.

These observations are used to inform our planning for groups of children, for individuals and our provision for resources as appropriate.

4. Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

The three prime areas are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal Social and Emotional Development• Communication and Language• Physical Development	The four specific areas are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Literacy• Mathematics• Understanding the world• Expressive arts and design
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We plan daily learning experiences from the children’s interests and believe they should play an active role in generating ideas for the curriculum. Each class plans for the continuous provision inside and outside (these are the activities that the children will be accessing independently throughout the week). The continuous provision plan ensures each area of learning is well-resourced and equipped for the children to learn, practise, transfer and develop skills. The whole class plans focus on teaching numeracy, literacy and enquiry skills during carpet sessions and adult directed tasks. We currently organise the curriculum through half termly topics/themes in Nursery (Haseltine only) and Reception. The topics cover areas that are familiar and of interest to young children and also enable us to deliver a creative and balanced curriculum. The long term plan reflects a balance of the prime and specific areas of learning and development matters.

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We believe that the seven areas of learning are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectation for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Play and exploration

We value the importance of play in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Research and evidence identifies purposeful structured play both indoors and outdoors as the most appropriate learning style for young children. Well planned play is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge.

Assessment

In our federation, we recognise that effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Through observation we assess the children’s interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children’s learning.

The following are used to assess and record:

- Observations – photographs and annotations of the children taking part in self-initiated activities. These observations will refer to all areas of learning and the characteristics of effective learning.
- Annotated learning samples
- Reading records and guided reading folders
- Phonics tracking document

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- Assessing against EYFS developmental stages through EExAT at Haseltine and ILD at Fairlawn.
- Making a best-fit judgment against the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception
- Reports to parents based on their child's development against the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of effective learning (at the end of the summer term)

Observations of the children's learning support teachers to adapt plans for the following day and inform their planning for the next week. They allow teachers and LSAs to target specific skills and needs and make room for children to develop at their own personal pace.

We also give the children regular opportunities to feed into their profile. We ask children to talk about photographs or work samples and we record what the child says. Parents have the opportunity to input into their child's profile. In addition, each term parents are invited to attend parent's evening to discuss their child's learning with the class teacher and to contribute to their next steps.

Parents as Partners and the Wider Context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways. Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on regular outings and inviting members of the community into our settings.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and child-minders. On entry to both schools, parents are offered a home visit with their child's class teacher and LSA to support the settling in process. We consider home visits to be an integral part of good early years practice. We believe that home visits allow us to:

- Build strong relationships between home and school.
- Encourage the children to become familiar with their teacher in a setting that they are used to, which in turn will help them to settle in much more quickly in the Nursery.
- Gain good understanding of each child, such as likes and dislikes, interests and people that are important to them.
- Understand and respond to any concerns that parents/children might have about starting school.
- Appreciate the wealth of learning that goes on in the home.

Parents receive an information booklet about the setting and an 'All about me' booklet is completed. Children attend introductory sessions to Nursery (Haseltine) and Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. Children in Nursery (Haseltine) are entitled to 15 hours in the setting with staggered starts – some children are eligible for 30 hour places (please refer to Haseltine's admissions policy for more information). Reception children start full time in September and have a settling in period where the length of the day is gradually increased.

In the final 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. The children also spend time with their Year 1 teacher prior to entry to year 1. In the Nursery (Haseltine), staff from other primary schools are invited to meet the children they are receiving from the Federation. If this not possible, professional discussions are held out of school hours and reports are sent to the new schools.

Intimate care policy

Parents are encouraged to train their child at home as part of their daily routine, however some children may start school or Nursery prior to becoming fully toilet trained. At Fairlawn and Haseltine Federation we feel it is important that we maintain the dignity of the individual child and are sensitive to their needs and preferences. Parents will be telephoned on the first occurrence of an accident and consent will be obtained.

If a child has an accident or soils themselves during school time, we will follow the steps outlined in the Intimate Care Policy.

Staffing

Each child is assigned to a key person. In Reception, the child's key person will be their class teacher as they will be the first point of contact for parents and will plan and ensure that the children in their care are settled and happy. In nursery, each teacher will be assigned a group of key children, they have overall responsibility for the progress and development of their group.

Each Reception class has a qualified teacher and a Learning Support Assistant. The Nursery class has a qualified teacher and three Learning Support Assistants. When teachers are out of class during PPA time they are covered by a qualified teacher, HLTA/Cover Supervisor. Staff ratios in the Nursery are at least 1:13 but usually it is 1:8. Within Reception there is one class teacher for every thirty pupils (however, there have been cases where children have fallen into exception categories where class sizes have been over 30).

Please read the following policies in conjunction with this policy:

Fairlawn and Haseltine Federation Intimate Care Policy

Fairlawn and Haseltine Federation Policy for the Administration of Medication in School

Fairlawn and Haseltine Federation SEND policy

Fairlawn and Haseltine Federation Safeguarding and Welfare Policy

Haseltine Primary School Behaviour Policy

Fairlawn Primary School Behaviour Policy

Haseltine Primary School Admissions Policy

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