

Herstmonceux Pre School

Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

The following pages are an overview about the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS) and our beliefs, aims and systems in place within the Pre School to support all children, and families, through the EYFS whilst in our care.

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework became mandatory in September 2008 for all schools and early years providers in Ofsted registered settings attended by young children (from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday), and is a central part of the ten year childcare strategy, *Choice for parents, the best start for children* and the landmark Childcare Act 2006. It replaces the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage, the Birth to Three Matters framework and the National Standards for under 8's Daycare and Childminding. In March 2012 the revised Statutory Framework in the Early Years Foundation Stage was published and came into effect in September 2012.

In March 2014 the Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage was thoroughly revised and implemented.

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Assessing Children's Progress:

Throughout the year children are continually observed and these observations are in turn then assessed by the children's key person using the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, schemas, interaction/involvement and well-being. Observations are collected in two main ways.

Formative Assessment :

This is the type of assessment based on observations, photographs, video, children's own creation (drawings) and information from parents. Each child in the setting has a 'formal' observation carried out by their key person on a rotational or a needs basis as part of an ongoing programme, these are always carried out sensitively. Observations are taken of the targeted child during their play or completing various types of activities within the early years environment. Any interaction with peers or adults is recorded in a narrative form.

This information is then analysed in terms of the child's **well being**, the level of **interaction**, **involvement** levels and the areas of learning that have been evident, for instance **schemas** – these are patterns of repeatable action/behaviour. This information is evaluated by the child's key

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person, (sometimes the deputy, manager/EYP and SENCO –special education needs co-ordinator will be involved too), and then resources and activities are planned for, from these observations and recorded into the daily provision planning. All information we gather about the children is shared with their parents and in addition, parents/carers are actively encouraged to take their child's folder home every term and write their own observations on their child– this really supports us to build up a more accurate picture about the child with regards to their care, learning and development. We also have 'parents' voice' sheets, that we hand out termly with questions for parents to complete about their child, for instance special family outings.

Incidental, 'On The Spot' or Tracking Observations:

During planned activities and child initiated activities practitioners make notes about the children as they play and record any individual achievements during their time with us. These will be recorded on designated 'On the Spot Observations' forms or noted directly into the child's folder in the correct section; this information is evaluated regularly by the key person so the child's next planned experiences to continue on their pathway of learning can be planned for. The information gathered tells us what the children can do and is used to inform future planning. All of the members of staff have a high level of observational skills and will be evaluated the children's play daily to improve the playing experiences for all children and are share the children's actions with their parents whenever possible. This is an ongoing process and will be part of each child's individual learning journey throughout their time with us.

Summative Assessment:

This is a summary from all of the formative assessment carried out over a long period of time; each child's key person will complete statements about the child's develop and learning achievements at specific age related periods throughout their time at Pre School. These are recorded onto a proforma document. On transition to another setting, or the Reception class at the Primary school, we will pass these assessments to assist our fellow professionals acquiring a clear picture about where each child is within the seven areas of learning and development within the Early Years Foundation stage framework. Visually the coloured age range graphs quickly highlight where each child is in relation to their progress towards the early learning goals.

In addition, at Herstmonceux Pre School we have our own system of mapping where each child is and these Summative charts are completed three times a year. By completing these we can see *at a glance* where each child is, in relation to the age range within the Early Years Foundation stage, and plan for their progression.

The EYFS Profile (learning journey) is a statutory summative assessment document and all reception class teachers are required to complete one, for each child, at the end of their time within reception. The Department for Education will use these documents to analyse young children's progression and achievements in relation to specific set targets.

EYFS - Learning and Development Opportunities:

We recognise that children develop and learn in different ways, at different rates and that all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected. The Early Years

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Foundation Stage, Learning and Development is organised into *prime areas and specific areas*.

The **prime areas** are:

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

The **specific areas** are:

- literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding of the World (UW)
- Expressive arts and design (EAD)

We aim to ensure that all areas of learning including outdoor provision are organised and resourced to provide interesting experiences. One experience may provide a child with opportunities to develop a number of skills and concepts across several areas of learning. All areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage interconnect.

Planning for learning throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage is progressive. We acknowledge that children learn in different ways and on our planning system we reflect on the

Characteristics of effective teaching and learning, they are;

- ❖ **Playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’;
- ❖ **Active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- ❖ **Creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Within the learning and development the *development matters* column identifies knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that children will need if they are to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the EYFS. There is also support by giving:

- Examples of what children can do to help practitioners assess the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that children have achieved and to plan the next steps.
- Examples of what the practitioner needs to do to help the practitioner to teach.

Meeting the Diverse Needs of Children:

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we provide relevant learning and development opportunities and set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the diverse needs of children. Children bring to their early learning provision different experiences, interests, skills and knowledge that will affect their ability to learn. An awareness and understanding of the requirements of equal opportunities that cover race, gender, disability and of the code of practise on the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs is followed. (See Special Educational Needs and Equal Opportunities Policies)

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities– SEN:

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We plan for each child's individual learning requirements, including those children who need additional support or have particular needs or disabilities, carrying out Setting based support plans (SBSP). We have a nominated SENCO who liaises with staff, parents and outside agencies. Our aim is to ensure a multi-agency approach, ensuring we work together with other professionals and agencies, such as early years support teachers, speech therapist and local and community health services, to provide the best learning and support for young children.

Children with English as an Additional Language- EAL: We value linguistic diversity. Learning opportunities are planned to help children develop their English and support is provided to enable them to play a full role in all activities.

Partnership with Parents:

We recognise that parents are the child's first and main educators throughout their lives and we actively encourage good links between home and school. To offer the best learning experiences and ensure the transition from 'home' to 'pre school' is as smooth and emotionally as non traumatic as possible for each child we need to 'get to know' them as quickly as possible and talk to their parents. This starts from our home visits and introducing the child to their key person - developing a secondary attachment figure (Bowlby theory). Then, there is a two week 'settling in' period, where we ask parents to stay with their child - this is to;

1. help each child familiarize themselves with their key person, start forming a secondary attachment whilst parents are present -creating trust
2. to explore the setting in the presence of their parents
3. to observe the routine of the nursery
4. to gain confidence in new situations

Parents are actively encouraged to contribute to their child's care and education, for instance at parent meetings, held two/three times a year with their child's key person, parents are invited to share their observations, views, opinions and any concerns they may have in these meetings. Then parents and key persons will plan for the child's next steps in their learning and development. In addition, after each holiday break parents are given a parents' voice sheet to share their observations and experiences their children have experienced during the holiday. The information on them is so helpful, gaining a real insight into the child's life and their particular interests for the key persons'. We provide home observation sheets for parents to record their child's achievements, interests and experiences. In addition, we provide information on our daily communication board in the entrance hall. We have an *open door policy*, welcoming parents' in at any time, plus we actively encourage involvement from parents e.g. music and movement, singing, gardening, art activities etc.

We have a parent panel, this provides the opportunity for a small group of parents to meet with the Early Years teacher and manager, on a regular basis, throughout the year to review and discuss all aspects of Pre School life - from reviewing policies to the Christmas Party! We value the parents' thoughts, opinions and ideas and recognise as a team that it enhances our ability to critically analyse and reflect on our current practice.

The Wider Community;

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As a rural Pre School we are proud of the village of Herstmonceux and all it has to offer to children and their families. We want to develop a sense of belonging and pride to the children and to support this ethos we regularly take the children for walks around the village; onto the recreation park, past the primary school, fire station, local shops, doctors etc.

We organise regular visits from the local fire service and historically the fire engine has been brought into the car park for the children to explore.

We have very strong links and excellent relationship with the Primary School and frequently visit the school to familiarize the children with 'big' school prior to the transition process (Pre School-Reception class).

The local shops are used to the staff and children popping in for provisions and using 'real' money!

The village hall has numerous local community group/ clubs using the other rooms and the children have opportunities to meet and greet at various times of the year, for instance;

- ❖ the children sing to the luncheon club at Christmas time
- ❖ celebrate Harvest festival by giving food stuffs to the Church to distribute within the community
- ❖ join in with physical exercise with the older members of our community (Extend) occasionally.

We hope throughout their time with us your child will be happy, confident and curious to explore all experiences we provide indoors and outdoors – our pleasure and reward is watching each child grow and thrive and we look forward to celebrating their achievements with you.