



We are two inclusive schools, where individuals are welcome and celebrated.

Early Years Policy

Plan Owner / Author:	Karen Harrow & Theresa Elder
Date of Implementation:	April 2023
Review Date	April 2025
Version Number:	1

Document Change History

Version	Author	Date	Change Details

This document outlines the philosophy, aims and principles of early years teaching and learning in reception at Hollesley Primary School and Waldringfield Primary School. The document underpins practice in all areas of provision.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Hollesley and Waldringfield Primary Schools we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education. At Waldringfield Primary School and Hollesley Primary School we are implementing the new guidance set out in the “Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five” document (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2021). All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in reception to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents and guardians, support staff and the reception teachers work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

Aims

It is every child’s right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates. We aim to:

- provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment, which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- enable choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self-confidence
- work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions
- ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development
- provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs

Intent

The early learning goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of the reception year) and the educational programmes (the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children) are set out in the “Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage” document (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2021).

The seven areas of learning and development are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development
- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

The first three areas are termed ‘prime areas’ and the following four are ‘specific areas’.

Progression in the specific areas relies on a good grounding in the prime areas. These areas are all separated into further subcategories. At Hollesley and Waldringfield Primary Schools we believe that each of the seven areas are of equal importance. We aim to deliver all areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities.

Implementation

Our creative curriculum is made up of a range of topics which last for half a term and are split up into two smaller sub-topics within this. Our topics are based on a two-year rolling framework using the Cornerstones Curriculum, and this provides structure and coherence to the curriculum. We also address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term. We include links between areas of learning and development and opportunities for ICT. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities, and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified. We also identify specific learning objectives, activities, differentiation, and deployment of adults and resources, to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day-to-day basis. It allows for flexibility in response to individual children’s needs and interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessment.

We also introduce the Write Stuff writing scheme in the Spring term in order to develop the children’s vocabulary and extend their writing opportunities.

Our Creative Curriculum is underpinned by the ‘6Rs of Learning’:

- Readiness
- Resourcefulness
- Resilience
- Responsibility
- Reflection
- Respect

Children will be encouraged to approach their work using the 6Rs so that the school can achieve our main aims, namely to equip each of our children with the skills required to be an independent and responsible citizen who will continue learning effectively throughout their lives.

Staffing and Organisation

The teachers in both schools work very closely and there is consistency across the two classes. They liaise with the teaching assistants, regularly involving them in planning, preparation and assessment. We are always aiming to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding and so all practitioners are encouraged to participate in local authority courses, in-service and local cluster group training.

Assessment, Recording and Monitoring

At Waldringfield and Hollesley Primary School we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process. Each child has an individual online 'Learning Journey' on which this evidence is stored. This is moderated by cluster group moderation.

Baseline Assessment

From September 2021, all children entering the Reception class take part in a series of activities led by their class teacher to assess their communication, language and literacy, and Maths. The assessments will take place during the first six weeks of the Autumn Term. The Reception baseline assessment is a short and simple check of a child's early literacy, communication, language and maths skills when they begin school. The assessment will form the start of a new measure of how schools are helping their pupils to progress between Reception and year 6. Your child does not need to prepare. There is no pass mark or score and your child should not realise they're doing an assessment. This will be a really good starting point for the teachers to know what support each child requires as they start their individual journey through the school.

Formative Assessment

This type of planning informs everyday planning and is based on an ongoing observational assessment of each child's interests, achievements, and learning styles. This type of assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, baseline assessments, and other focused assessment: photographs, videos, annotated examples of work and information from parents.

Summative Assessment

During the year, we use Development Matters/Birth to 5 matters and the Early Learning Goals to informally assess your child's learning and to plan their next steps.

Learning through Play

At Hollesley and Waldringfield Primary Schools we do not make a distinction between work and play. We support children's learning through planned play activities, and decide when child initiated or adult led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We

believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in play themselves.

The Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming, stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident and are challenged to develop their independence. Activities are planned for both inside and outside; children have the freedom to move between indoor and outdoor areas at times during the school day. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry.

Admissions and Liaison with pre-school settings and induction

All of our intake are invited to start in September full time. During the summer term, children who will be starting school in September make visits to the reception class and the class teachers visit the children in their nursery settings. A new parents meeting is held in July to introduce the school's expectations and routines, and to outline the induction process and reception curriculum. Parents have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and to visit the reception classroom. Parents are given a reception brochure which outlines the reception curriculum and school routines. Uniform and book bags are available for viewing at this meeting. When appropriate, and if required, staff may visit the child in their home. This may happen if the child has a SEND or if the Parents or staff feel that it is in the child's best interests to have a more in depth induction into school.

Home/School Links

We recognise that parents or guardians are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents or guardians and practitioners work together in early years settings, 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:

- outlining the reception curriculum to parents/guardians during the new parents meeting in July, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home
- encouraging parents/guardians to listen to their child read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary
- regular learning updates via the online platforms
- encouraging relevant learning activities to be continued at home and ensuring that experiences at home are used to consolidate and develop learning in school
- discussing individual targets (next steps) with parents/guardians at parents' evenings (informed by the EYFS Profile)
- providing an annual written report to parents/guardians in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and EYFS assessment scales.

Equal Opportunities

All children should be given the opportunity to learn in a creative and encouraging learning environment which embraces a range of teaching styles. This approach motivates and supports

children's learning at all levels including Gifted, Able and Talented, EAL and those identified with a Special Educational Need.

Inclusion

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional adult support may be provided for children with special medical needs or SEND thus increasing the adult/pupil ratio. Individual Education Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. Reception teachers discuss these targets with the child and his/her parents/guardians. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The school's SEN co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

Nursery

At Hollesley our Early Years class consists of Nursery and Reception children. Our nursery can cater up to 15 children, each unique and important. Our dedicated team of Early Years Practitioners are committed to ensuring our children have the best early years learning journey, to prepare your child for their primary education.

In our nursery we aim to provide early years learning experiences which are happy, active, exciting, fun and secure and support the development, care and learning needs of individual children. We follow a legal document called the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. The children have their own learning journey and have personalised 'next steps' to ensure that they are challenged and are developing at their own level. See Nursery Policy.

