



# Early Years Policy

November 2025

At Henry Whipple Primary School we believe that “All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.”.

“Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage”, Department for Education January 2024

### **Aims**

We will aim to provide a high quality early years’ education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

At Henry Whipple Primary School, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of all children including those with additional needs.
- Provide a balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Provide our children with a curriculum that is designed to be flexible, engaging and exciting so that their unique needs, passions and interests are embraced within the wider school context.
- Provide opportunities for children to learn purposefully through carefully planned experiences.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs enabling them to make progress.
- Work in partnership with parents/guardians, value their contributions and engage them in their child’s learning journey.
- Provide a curriculum that is actively inclusive of all ethnicities, cultures, religions, home languages, family backgrounds, learning difficulties, disabilities, genders or abilities. To know that every child is an exceptional individual and to celebrate and respect differences within our diverse school community
- allow all children to develop interpersonal skills and build resilience through our ‘Believe, Belong, Achieve’ ethos to become critical and creative thinkers
- Inspire our children to become accomplished, happy individuals, ready to reach their full potential in an ever-changing world
- Create an environment in which children show care and respect for one another and the world around them.

- Provide quality interactions with all children, that promote communication and language development.
- Provide a learning environment that encourages children to be confident working independently and become resilient learners.

### Learning and Development at Henry Whipple

At Henry Whipple we

- Ensure that teaching and learning support the Characteristics of Effective Learning:  
**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  
**Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things
- Plan following the Early Years Statutory Framework
- Provide a curriculum that is child-centered which engages the children.
- Encourage active learning to ensure the children are motivated and interested.
- Ensure pupils learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities.
- Ensure all areas of the EYFS curriculum are followed and planned for to ensure there is a broad, balanced and progressive learning environment and curriculum.
- Offering learning experiences for the seven areas of the EYFS curriculum:

**Communication and Language**

**Personal, Social & Emotional Development**

**Physical Development**

**Literacy**

**Mathematics**

**Understanding the World**

**Expressive Arts & Design**

- Our planning within these areas has a strong focus on the children's needs, their interests and their stages of development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.
- Invest in the wider curriculum through learning away, enrichment and inviting external visitors
- Strive for all children to reach a Good Level of Development at the end of Foundation 2.
- Strive to ensure all children make good progress in all areas of the curriculum.

### **The Learning Environment**

Our Foundation provision is organised into Foundation 1 (N1 and N2) and Foundation 2. Both classes share the classroom and we operate as a unit. Resources and adult interactions are adapted to ensure the most appropriate learning for all children. Foundation 1 and Foundation 2 children have their own carpet spaces where they will participate in guided learning, such as phonics,

mathematics, reading, writing and handwriting. Children are encouraged to explore and learn securely and safely with age / stage appropriate resources and experiences. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Each area of learning has resources that are adapted to meet the different stages of learning from N1 to F2. The adults with the classroom are the most valued resource. Adults focus on quality interactions, adapting their interaction to meet the needs of the children they are working with.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Henry Whipple Primary School we greatly value the important role 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. The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The Foundation team work effectively together to support children's learning and development. At Henry Whipple Primary School we recognise that young children learn best through play therefore we value play as vehicle for young children's learning and offer a curriculum that incorporates purposeful play.

### **Observations & Assessments**

We make regular assessments of children's' learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of short and recorded observations made by teachers or teaching partners. These observations are recorded digitally using 'Tapestry'. Teacher knowledge of children, gained through quality interactions, is our most important and valued form of assessment. Literacy and mathematics assessments and collected samples of work in children's learning journals, are also used to assess the children in the foundation stage. Observations are only recorded when necessary, allowing practitioners to fully focus on their interactions with children.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their child's progress. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss progress throughout their child's learning journey and celebrate their work throughout the school year.

All children are assessed on entry to F1 which gives the foundation team a baseline score which they use to identify any gaps in learning and inform future provision.

Children are assessed again on entry to full-time school in F2 through teacher observation, phonics and mathematics assessments. Foundation 2 children will also be assessed using the Reception Baseline Assessment. Children's progress is then monitored throughout the year, through formative assessment.

In the Summer term of Foundation 2, teachers consider the 17 Early Learning Goals in the EYFS Profile to decide whether each child is working at the expected levels or have not yet met the levels. Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observation and teacher knowledge. All relevant records; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Children are assessed as working at either the 'expected' level or 'emerging' level against the 17 Early Learning Goals. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is used to aid a successful transition into year 1, as it provides accurate assessment data that is shared with the year 1 team.

The Early Learning Goals are:

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

ELG: Speaking

ELG: Self-Regulation

ELG: Managing Self

ELG: Building Relationships

ELG: Gross Motor Skills

ELG: Fine Motor Skills

ELG: Comprehension

ELG: Word Reading

ELG: Writing

ELG: Number

ELG: Numerical Patterns

ELG: Past and Present

ELG: People, Culture and Communities

ELG: The Natural World

ELG: Creating with Materials

ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive

The results of the Profile are shared with parents and/or carers, and there are opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss this information.

The EYFS profile results are reported to the local authority, who monitor and moderate the judgements made.

Teachers participate in regular in-house, cluster and local authority moderation meetings. This provides an external quality assurance and validation of our teacher assessments.

### **Admissions**

Our Foundation Stage provision comprises of two classes (Foundation 1 and Foundation 2).

Foundation One children can be offered a place after their third birthday. They are known as N1 and are given time and support to understand and enjoy their nursery experience. The September following their third birthday they are then known as N2. N1 children are usually offered an afternoon place and N2 children are usually offered a morning place.

Foundation Two children begin full time education the September after their fourth birthday and are known as F2.

In Foundation 1, we offer both part and full time places.

Places are offered to Foundation 1 children, based on availability and are prioritised based on the following criteria:

- Children living within the school catchment area.
- Date of application

Full time places are based on availability and are priorities based on the following criteria

- Staffing capacity, including staffing capacity over lunchtime periods.
- 30 hours funding. Should demand exceed supply, places will be offered to N2 children in age order (oldest first)
- Early Years Pupil Premium Funding based on each child's individual needs and circumstances.

Full time places are offered at the start of every term.

To apply for a foundation 1 place, contact the school office, where you will be offered an application form. Upon the receipt of this you will be sent a letter that will inform you that either a place has been granted or you will be informed that your child has been placed on a waiting list. You will not usually hear from us again until the half term before your child's third birthday when you will be invited to visit us and attend an '**expectations meeting**' with our Early Years Lead and Headteacher.

Please note that just because a child has a Foundation 1 place this does not guarantee them an automatic full-time place in Foundation 2 as this is determined by the Local Authority admissions department. Parents/ carers will need to make their own application.

### **Safeguarding**

The welfare, protection and safety of every child in our care is of paramount importance. We take our responsibility to safeguard children seriously. Staff ratios and risk assessments are in place at all times to ensure the safety of our children.

For additional guidance on Safeguarding and whole school policies please see:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

E Safety Policy

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

All children are valued at Henry Whipple Primary school. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school's SENCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Local Offer.

In Foundation we aim to ensure that our curriculum meets the needs of all children. Using our 'enhancement model' of provision, children have the opportunity to become very secure with the resources around them as they remain predominantly the same. Children's learning is then enhanced with small added resources that the child can progress onto. Quality interactions are used to support those children with additional needs. Adults will focus their interactions to support specific needs and will always remain adaptive with their teaching.

We aim to provide a communication friendly environment and we ensure that all staff are upskilled to interact in a way that promotes progress within communication and language.

Please see SEND policy.

### **Health**

Children are provided with a healthy snack and an option of milk daily. Children can bring their own water in water bottles, which can be accessed throughout the day.

We expect all children to have a school meal. Foundation 2 children are provided with a free school meal. Foundation 1, full time, children will be provided with a hot school meal at the cost of £2.15 per day unless your child is in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium, in which case this is funded.

### **Transition**

Foundation 2 and Year 1 teachers work together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

### **Paediatric First Aiders**

When children are eating children will always be within sight and hearing of an adult. We ensure that a paediatric first aid trained member of staff is always within the unit when children are eating. A paediatric first aider is also always available at all other times.

### **At Henry Whipple Primary School:**

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout F2.
- F2 practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer term, encouraging less dependence on adult support.
- EYFS Profiles are passed on to Year 1 teachers along with an age & stage assessment.
- F2 and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss the individual needs of children in July.
- F2 children will begin the transition to year 1 at the end of the Summer Term to ensure a comfortable return to school in September.
  - F1 (n2) Children are exposed to specific terminology and routines to prepare them for transition to F2.

### **Home/School Links**

We recognise that parents/guardians are the child's first and most important educators. We aim to develop this by:

- ❖ Outlining the school's expectations to parents during the new parents meeting for both F1 and F2 children.
- ❖ Developing positive relationships with all of our families.
- ❖ Expecting parents to always act as role models in their conduct on the school site
- ❖ Expect parents to complete the home/school agreement.
- ❖ Sending home a half-termly newsletter, informing parents of the new learning strand.
- ❖ Expect parents to listen to their child read '**every school day**' and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary.
- ❖ Expect parents to support and engage in any referrals to other agencies to support their child's learning needs
- ❖ Encouraging parents to support any additional work set.

- ❖ Inviting families to 'Leaning Together' sessions to observe and participate in their child's learning.

### **Times**

Foundation 1 AM sessions 8:45-11:45am

Foundation 1 PM sessions 12:15-3:15pm

Foundation 1 Full time 8:45 – 3:15pm

Foundation 2 full-time 8:45 – 3:15pm