



**South Hiendley Primary School**

## **Early Years Policy**

Foundation Stage Leader: Mrs. M Reed

Date: September 2018

Review Date: September 2019



## **Rationale**

In the Early Years (EY) at South Hiendley Primary School we believe in providing children with a safe and stimulating environment where they can flourish. We endeavour to provide an EY that gives children the opportunities to develop further the concepts, attitudes, skills and knowledge that they have learnt at home and in other settings. This in turn allows them to gain a strong base on which to build future learning and 'school readiness'. We strive to provide a balanced curriculum that encourages communication, thinking, exploration, investigation, cultural awareness, creativity and imagination both in the indoor and outdoor environments.

We pride ourselves on listening to the children, and those who care for them, and using this information to personalise each child's learning. Therefore, children's interests are at the centre of our topic choice and are used to inform the decisions we make to enhance the provision. We think learning should be fun so that children feel inspired to do it over and over again! We understand the importance of first hand practical learning experiences, this being evidenced by the use of the indoor and outdoor environments to challenge children empowering them with a love of learning and a natural curiosity.

We believe that every child is unique and should be treated so, allowing each of them the opportunity to develop and learn in a safe and nurturing environment where play and learning is combined.

We are committed to giving our children the best possible start to their school life, teaching them skills which ensure their well-being now and success in the future.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The EY Unit at South Hiendley Primary School aims to create a happy and caring atmosphere, where learning is made fun. Children are encouraged to develop self-confidence, become more independent and learn how to share and join in with group activities. The EY offers a broad and balanced curriculum sufficiently flexible to allow for individual development. The fundamental role of the parent (s) / carer (s) is fully acknowledged within the setting, encouraging home / school liaison which is mutually informative.

## **Planning and Organisation**

The planning of learning experiences in the EY Unit is in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and curriculum guidance from Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Practitioners are committed to providing experiences for learning and development through the themes, principles and practice outlined in the documentation. The well planned Continuous Basic Provision and learning experiences, promote a quality learning environment allowing the children to play and explore, take part in active learning and create and think critically.

The EY practitioners analyse data to identify next steps in children's learning and use this to inform the continuous provision and learning experiences that we provide for our pupils. Continuous provision is designed to develop key skills, challenge our children and encourage them to obtain *characteristics of effective learning* (engagement, motivation and thinking) in order to become independent life-long learners.

Planning is recorded each half-term on in an EY specific format - Possible Lines of Development. Theme choices are driven by children's interests and developmental needs.

The organisation of the session enables play to be the core element and a vehicle for learning as practitioners play for extended periods with the children following an objective-led skills based approach. Structured linked sessions are used to teach Physical Development including handwriting, Phonics, Maths, Literacy and Communication and Language.

**Prime Areas of Learning** are fundamental, interlinked and support development in all other areas.

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

**Specific Areas of Learning** include the key skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World

- Expressive Arts & Design

### **Transition (see also Transition Policy)**

#### **Transition from Home to EY Unit Part - Time Session:**

**STAY & PLAY:** A Stay & Play Group is run weekly for pre-school children and their parents / carers. The group is run by the school Learning Mentor.

**FEET:** parent/carers are invited to attend a FEET group for 8 weeks prior to them starting in the EY Unit Part -Time Session. This is run by one of the EY Unit's Nursery Nurses. A visit is made to the group by the Nursery Teacher. This encourages families to begin to build partnerships with the EY Units Practitioners before their child attends. The group also accesses the EY Unit's outdoor provision during the session.

**OPEN DAY:** Parents/carers and children are invited to an open - afternoon/morning in the EY Unit where they can come and meet practitioners and explore the environment. They also listen to a presentation about the EY curriculum, including the entry expectations for both Nursery and Reception, as well as information specific to the setting. During this time parents / carers are provided with an information pack.

**VISITS:** On their first day they attend the session for one hour on their own. This increases to two hours the second day and three hours (full session) on the third day. This is however flexible in order to meet the child's needs.

**CHILD QUESTIONNAIRES:** Parents / carers are requested to complete a questionnaire about their child detailing things they like, dislike and anything that worries them. It also asks about independence, speaking, listening and early mathematics.

**PARENT / CARER QUESTIONNAIRE:** Each parent / carer speaks to the Nursery teacher on a one-one basis to complete a verbal questionnaire about their family / child. Information requested includes toileting, behaviour, speech and language, involvement of other professionals and experience of previous settings.

**Transition from Part-Time Session to Full Time School:**

**CLASS SWAPS:** The children spend a day at full-time school. During which they also experience LUNCH TIME and are offered a free school meal.

**PARENTS / CARERS INFORMATION MEETING:** parents / carers are invited to an information presentation about their child starting full time education. They are also given an information pack.

**PARENTS INFORMATION MEETING ON READING:** Parents / carers are invited to a Reading Inspire Afternoon. This includes a presentation on Reading in Reception including end of year expectations and the necessity for parent partnerships to support individual reading. Parents are given the opportunity to observe their child take part in a Guided Reading session and play phonics games.

**CHILD QUESTIONNAIRES:** Parents / carers are requested to complete a questionnaire about their child detailing things they like, dislike and anything that worries them. It also asks about independence, literacy and mathematics.

**PARENT / CARER QUESTIONNAIRE:** The parent / carer of children new to the EY Unit speak to the Reception teacher on a one-one basis to complete a verbal questionnaire about their family / child. Information requested includes toileting, behaviour, speech and language, involvement of other professionals and experience of previous settings.

**TEACHER / TEACHER TRANSITION MEETINGS:** The Nursery and Reception teachers meet together to share information about the children. They discuss children's individual needs, characteristics of learning and interests. They set next step layered targets for the cohort and share End of Nursery scores and predicted Profile Point scores for the end of Reception.

**Transition from Another Setting:**

**INFORMATION:** Information passed on from another setting is fed into Baseline Assessment.

**COMMUNICATION:** With parental consent previous settings are contacted usually by telephone so that practitioners can share information about the child.

**VISITS TO FEEDER SETTING:** Where appropriate 'feeder' settings are visited by a practitioner.

### **Transition from EYFS to Year One:**

**TEACHER / TEACHER TRANSITION MEETINGS:** The Reception and YR1 teachers meet together to share information about the children. They discuss children's individual needs, characteristics of learning and interests. They set next step layered targets for the cohort and share Profile Point scores and make predictions for the end of Year 1, including Year 1 Phonics check.

### **Role of Practitioner**

The EY practitioners are an experienced team with an excellent knowledge of how children develop and learn and an understanding of their physical, intellectual, linguistic, emotional and social needs. Teachers and Nursery Nurses in the EY aim to provide stimulating learning environments and well planned purposeful experiences, to encourage children to become interested in themselves, other people and the world around them. All practitioners make observational assessments of the children, through an objective-led approach. These are then recorded on Target Tracker and regularly moderated by the EY Team.

### **Parent / Carer Partnerships**

Parent Partnerships are highly valued by all practitioners within the setting. We work in close partnership with parents and carers to gain a holistic vision of a child's development and incorporate opportunities to share and record everyone's perspective. The EY Unit encourages parent / carer partnerships in a variety of ways, such as: -

- **'Open Door Policy':** Parents / carers are encouraged to share with practitioners, information about their child, from everyday events, concerns and celebrations. Practitioners make themselves available to talk to parents / carers during encouraging a free-flow of information.

- **Parent / Carer Notice Board:** various items are displayed for parent / carers information including, snack, topic, dates and news. Local events are also advertised, such as activities run in the community.
- **Home Learning Observation Sheets:** Parents / carers are asked to complete a Home Learning Observation Sheet every term, recording things that their children have achieved or developed over the term. This can include out of school activities such as swimming or dance.
- **Interest Tree:** children take home a leaf on which to write something they are interested in, this is used to inform planning and resource choice.
- **Wall of Stars:** each child has a star with their photograph on, this is displayed in the EY Unit. Each term the practitioner, child and parent write something on the star that the child has achieved over that period. Parents / carers' perspectives are fed into the child's Record of Development.
- **Parent / Carer Consultations:** parent / carers are invited to attend a consultation with practitioners to discuss their child's development and share 'next steps' targets. Additional consultations are arranged on parental request.
- **Topic Talk:** each half term a letter is sent home to parents / carers detailing the topic focus for that half term.
- **News Letters:** weekly school news letters are sent out to parent / carers.

### **SEN / Equal Opportunities**

SHS Unit follows the school's practices and procedures in line with the SEN Policy and Disability Equality Scheme to ensure equality and inclusion of all children. The school aims to ensure equal access to the EY irrespective of ethnic or cultural origin, gender, physical or mental ability.

### **Expectations of Attainment and Progress in the EY**

#### Baseline Entry Expectations to Nursery

Age Related Expectation - developing within 30-50 months.

#### Baseline Entry Expectations to Reception

Age Related Expectation - developing within 40-60 months.

#### End of Reception Expectations

Age Related Expectation - meeting Early Learning Goals, scoring 2 in all areas of development in the EY Profile.

### **Assessment, Reporting and Recording**

On entry to EY Baseline Assessments are made against ARE, reflecting the practitioner, parent/carer and child's 'voice'. This is updated and reviewed termly and recorded on Target Tracker . This is then used to complete the EY Profile at the end of EY. Over the EY information is collected that reflects the child's characteristics of learning, ability, charts progress and celebrates success. This may include samples of work and annotation slips, photographs and observations. Individual records are kept noting basic skills such as name recognition and writing, phonic knowledge / phase, spelling and reading of High Frequency Words and developments in Mathematics.

In accordance with guidance from the National Assessment Agency, children in the EY are assessed through the analysis of evidence collected as an ongoing process through:

- the practitioner's knowledge of the child
- information from a range of contributors
- observations of the child
- focused assessments

Moderation Meetings take place 'in-house' within and across the phases (EY and KS1) and applicable Subject Leaders are invited to attend. LA and MAT Moderation Meetings are attended.

Annual Reports are written to Parents / Carers of children at the end of Nursery and Reception. Parents / Carers are invited to consultations over the year to discuss their child's achievements, developments and next steps.