



Highters Heath
Nursery School

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Article 28: You have the right to a good quality education

Teaching and Learning Policy

Introduction

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and quality 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.

Ref: *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021* [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) Statutory Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Section 40(2)(a) of the Childcare Act 2006 stipulates that Early Years providers must secure that their provision meets the learning and development requirements as specified in the EYFS (Learning and Development Requirements) Order 2007 (S.I. 2007/1772) (amended 2014).

Ref: *2016 Early Years Foundation Stage: Assessment & Reporting Arrangements (ARA)* www.gov.uk/guidance

Our Aims

At Highters Heath Nursery School, we aim to:

- Ensure that child-centred provision supports the learning and development of every child.
- Maintain and develop a safe and inspiring learning environment where well-being and involvement is high.
- Develop and maintain quality teaching and learning through our reflective practice.
- Work with our whole community.



Objectives

These will be achieved through the following objectives:

- Inspiring children to become enthusiastic, confident and independent learners.
- Offering children a wide range of learning experiences and opportunities.
- Motivating and inspiring children to plan and initiate their own learning.
- Valuing and nurturing children's curiosity.
- Following the Statutory Guidance of the EYFS and Birmingham Children's Trust.
- Access to continuous provision providing natural, open-ended resources.
- Being respectful and respecting everyone's contribution.
- Providing time and space to reflect as a staff team on children's learning; using observations and documentation to assess, target and plan for future development.
- Welcoming and supporting students from a variety of educational establishments to form an understanding of early years practice.
- Valuing and nurturing each child as an individual person and creating trusting relationships where learning can take place.
- Developing strong, trusting relationships with all stakeholders.
- Supporting the children in their transition to Primary School.

Work In Practice- Overarching Principles

1. The Unique Child

Our Reflective Practice

Through our continuous professional development we are developing our reflective practice to meet the needs of children's development within the cohort and follow 'In The Moment Planning'. We plan provision according to the interests of the children and make time to meet as different groups and as a whole staff team to reflect on the children's learning.

Individual Needs

We acknowledge that specific actions may need to take place to ensure that children who have SEND are provided for intrinsically. We aim to provide access to: activities, the physical environment, both inside and out, resources, including displays and visits outside of school. The range of resources will aim to respond to the learning needs of all children and reflect the society in which we live. These may include specialist materials, such as those accessed through sight, touch, sound and smell. Through this provision we aim to promote positive images to prepare our children for the next phase of their education.



2. Positive Relationships

We believe that parents/ carers are a child's first educator and have a vast amount of knowledge about their development. We encourage parents/ carers to share their thoughts and any concerns regarding their child's learning and development. They have daily contact with their child's Key Person to discuss any issues or concerns. We appreciate the time parents/ carers give to participate in their child's learning through contributing to their journals on Tapestry, participating in workshops and stay and play sessions, attending parent consultations and supporting their child on school visits.

- **Key Person System:**

Each child and family has a named key practitioner. This offers the opportunity for a special relationship to develop. The Key Person builds a close relationship by acting as a companion for the child and being mindful to the needs of the child during each day. Sharing information and creating opportunities to talk during the day builds trust and partnership. The Key Person acts as a champion for the child and parent/ carer.

- **Transitions:**

Each child and family is unique. We offer Home Visits and work together to support the settling process. When parents feel comfortable in the setting, it helps their children to settle. Each child's transition to and from Highters Heath is unique, according to them and their needs.

- **Parent Volunteers:**

Parents and carers are invited in to school to observe practitioners working alongside the children and to support children's play.

3. Our Enabling Environments

We provide high quality Enabling Environments for early learning and care. There are a range of different part-time and full-time groups for children aged 2-4 years old, based on criteria and entitlement.

We aim to provide stimulating environments where children will want to engage and express themselves. A range of teaching and learning approaches are used to support children's different learning styles to acknowledge their background, the pace they work, their stamina, concentration and emotional well-being. **The importance of play is considered an essential approach to learning and teaching**, focusing on the process rather than the outcome. We believe that understanding and concentrating on the process of learning will automatically produce an outcome, with the added bonus of sustained learning.

The Learning Environment is zoned into different areas and children can choose freely between these areas, both inside and outside. Resources are available to the children and are easily accessible to support their independent play and interests.



4. Learning and Development

We believe that children learn by exploring, investigating, discovering, creating, practicing, rehearsing, repeating, revising and consolidating their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes through playful learning. Children develop confidence, a 'can do' attitude from having time and freedom to choose who to be with, where to go and what to do.

We also provide planned opportunities for group learning in daily group time. Learning together through...

- Companionship
- Apprenticeship
- Citizenship
- Caring for each other
- Stories
- Sense of belonging to a group
- Talking
- Caring for living creatures and plants
- Planning
- Sharing news
- Reflection
- Caring for the learning spaces
- Having a voice
- Building relationships

Activities for the Specific Areas of the EYFS - number, shape space and measure, reading and writing, are introduced both in free-flow activities and at group time.

Children are encouraged to use their skills and knowledge throughout their play.

Daily Routine

The children build relationships with their peers and the adults in Nursery through:

- Meeting and greeting by the Key Person
- Group time on entry (N2 cohort) to meet and plan learning
- Child initiated play indoors and outdoors
- Group time at the end of the session
- Times to eat together, at group time (toast), snack and lunch time.
- Personal care routines- learning and development time for Key Person and child during nappy changing, changing clothes, washing, eating, quiet / resting times.



Prime Areas

Communication and Language involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical Development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Specific Areas

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the World involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play, and design and technology.



Characteristics Of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected:

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 achieve what they set out to do

Creating and Thinking Critically- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between these ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Providing Challenge

Children are supported to take new risks and explore, try new activities and judge risk for themselves. Staff will always respect children's efforts and ideas, so they feel safe to take a risk with a new idea.

We provide open ended resources and experiences that encourage children to explore, investigate, think, ask and answer questions.

Risk Taking

Risk taking in children's play helps children to:

- Test their physical limits
- Develop their perceptual-motor capacity
- Learn to avoid and adjust to dangerous environments and activities

Eliminating risk leads to a child's inability to assess danger for themselves.

We offer opportunities for risk, challenge and adventure (such as climbing trees, using real tools, cooking opportunities) which have been suitably risk-benefit assessed and considered as purposeful.



The Importance of Home Languages

Some of our children start nursery speaking languages other than English and are at an early stage of acquiring English.

We know that bilingualism is an asset and the first language has a continuing and significant role in identity, learning and the acquisition of additional languages. Supporting continued development of first language and promoting the use of first language for learning enables children to access learning opportunities within the EYFS and beyond through their full language repertoire.

The skills, knowledge and understanding of children learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) are often underestimated. Cognitive challenge can be and should be kept appropriately high through the provision of linguistic and contextual support. Language acquisition goes hand in hand with cognitive and academic development, with an inclusive curriculum as the context.

Personality plays a great part in language development. Some children go through an extended period of silence when entering an unfamiliar language environment; others may continue to speak the language they know best, regardless of who can understand them. Each child must be carefully observed so that, when their situation begins to change, parents and practitioners can support their next steps.

Like all children, those learning EAL thrive and learn best where practice is excellent; key factors include the inclusive attitude and ethos set by leaders and managers and required of all practitioners in the setting, an understanding that bilingualism is an asset, genuinely reflective practice and an adherence to the belief that every child matters.

Adapted from Supporting Children Learning English as an Additional Language National Strategy 2007



5. Capturing Thinking, Learning and Development Observation - Planning - Assessment

At Highters Heath Nursery School we capture children's learning in a variety of ways. One method is through photographs and annotations, often identifying the learning and teaching taking place and recording this using an online journal called 'Tapestry'. This is shared with parents/ carers and they are encouraged to contribute to their child's Learning Journey, adding photographs and explanations of fun experiences outside of nursery. By sharing observations of children's interests, we plan a number of ways to respond to the children. We also have focus weeks where each child is 'celebrated', regular whole staff meetings where staff evaluate and plan for children's learning, and daily discussion and informal planning sessions and reflections.

Possible Lines of Development may include

- Setting up a provocation
- Further observation
- Discussion with children
- Verbalising possible questions
- Planning a further activity
- 'Thinking out loud'
- Exploring the same idea using a variety of media
- Researching a particular areas of interest

We plan for and assess children's learning 'in the moment', exploring these Possible Lines of Development immediately. We review their learning in relation to the OPAL (Observation of Play and Learning) milestones at set points to track their achievement and progress.



Responsibilities

Governors

- Governors monitor children's progress through the analysis of data produced by the Senior Teacher.
- Specific learning priorities identified in School Improvement Planning are monitored through the Head Teacher's report to Governors.
- Governors visit the school to observe work in practice, the learning environment and focused learning priorities.

Head Teacher

- Ensures the provision meets the learning and development needs of the cohort and follows the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Involves external agencies to support in the assessment of the quality of Learning and Teaching e.g. Quality Mark, ECERS and Peer to Peer support.
- Uses Appraisal targets to challenge teaching and learning opportunities.
- Provides professional development opportunities to support Learning and Teaching.
- Monitors Teaching and Learning practice through scrutinising children's progress records, observations of learning and teaching through learning walks and peer observation.
- Provides opportunities for parents to support their children's learning, including provision of their child's progress and an opportunity to discuss this with the school.

Teachers

- Take responsibility for learning environments, both indoors and out to ensure activities and resources meet the needs of the learners.
- Create opportunities which link to all areas of learning and development and evaluate the impact.
- Support Teaching Assistants to reflect on and assess children's learning.
- Meet with parents to discuss children's progress.
- Take responsibility for the learning and development of class groups through recording assessments and moderating these across the setting.
- Take responsibility for a Key Group's records.
- Differentiate activities to suit the needs of the learners.
- Observe and document children's learning.

Teaching Assistants/ Nursery Officers

- Support the class teacher/ senior leader in the planning and development of the learning environment.



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- Support teachers in learning walks and peer observations to develop a culture of reflective practice.
- Support teachers in the reflection and preparation of activities.
- Reflect with other practitioners to highlight learning and plan for development.
- Meet with parents of their Key Group to discuss the children's progress.
- Take responsibility for a Key Group of children and their records.
- Observe and document children's learning.
- Assess children's learning using on-going observations and documentation.
- Take responsibility for a particular activity or area of learning linked to the EYFS and ensure resources are appropriate and well-maintained.

Parents/ Carers

- Follow our home-school agreement.
- Attend workshops where possible.
- Consult with practitioners about the learning and development of their child.
- Contribute to their child's Learning Journal.

Children

- Make choices within their play.
- Think critically about what they see and do.
- Concentrate and keep on trying.
- Are willing to have a go at activities.
- Have fun learning!