



## Hippings Methodist Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



'As a family we do our best with God in our hearts'  
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me: Philippians 4 verse 13

**Our loving school endeavours to provide the best possible all-round education in a Christian setting. We will be a family that does our best with God in our hearts understanding that we are all His children. We aim for all within our school to develop spiritually, morally, academically and culturally.**

*"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, 2023)

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Hippings Methodist Primary School, we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Hippings Methodist Primary School.

### Aims - Intent

At Hippings Methodist Primary School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually, in order to enable them to develop their full potential. We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially, spiritually and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions different to their own.

- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.

## **Curriculum - Implementation**

The EYFS for children is from birth to five years of age. All children begin school with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in the EYFS to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents/carers, support staff and the EYFS team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their care.

Our EYFS curriculum fulfils the Educational Programmes as set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (2023). Please see our **EYFS Curriculum Overview**.

We are committed to underpinning our provision with the four principles of the EYFS:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

**A unique child** - We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. Children will play, explore and 'have a go' at using all available resources to develop their experiences. Children will develop resilience and enjoy achievements through active learning, making links and exploring their ideas and strategies for problem solving through creating and thinking critically. Staff support the children in developing all these characteristics through playing alongside children and, where necessary, scaffolding and supporting their thoughts. We welcome all children and families into our settings so that they feel included, safe and valued. We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

**Positive relationships** - We know that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships so pride ourselves on ensuring that caring, respectful and professional partnerships are formed between practitioners, children and their families. We recognise that parents are the child's first educators and their importance for the child's welfare and education is paramount. Whilst all practitioners will work with all children, each child is assigned a key person. This is to ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person engages with and supports parents and carers in guiding their child's development both at school and at home. They will help families access more specialist support if appropriate. Each member of the Reception Class also has a Year 4 Buddy to welcome, help and encourage them as they settle into school life. Forming healthy, positive relationships ensures children feel happy and safe during their time at our school.

**Enabling environments** - We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. At Hippings Methodist Primary School, we understand the importance of a rich learning environment both inside and outside. The classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are learning areas where they are able to find and locate equipment and

resources independently. There are spaces to be active, be quiet and to rest. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor learning area too. Through observations, we assess pupils' interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning exciting activities and experiences to challenge and extend their learning.

**Learning and development** – There are seven areas of learning and development that are all important and inter-connected.

Three areas are crucial to develop lifelong learning and to help children form relationships.

These **prime areas** of learning are:

- **Communication and Language** – children have opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and experience a language rich environment.
- **Physical Development** – children have opportunities to be active and develop coordination skills (both gross motor and fine motor); they learn about healthy choices.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – children develop confidence and self-esteem; they learn how to manage feelings and respect others.

Additionally, there are four areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied.

These **specific areas** of learning are:

- **Literacy** – children learn how letters link to sounds and begin to read and write.
- **Mathematics** – children have opportunities to develop counting and calculation skills, to use numbers in everyday activities and recognise and describe shapes and measures.
- **Understanding the World** – children have opportunities to find out about past and present events, different people, cultures and communities and to explore the natural world around them.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – feelings and ideas are explored through music, dance, role-play, art and design.

At Hippings Methodist Primary School, we believe that effective learning involves playing and exploring with a 'can do' attitude, whilst thinking both creatively and critically through active learning opportunities. We do not make a distinction between work and play. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by both leading their own play and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners decide what they want children to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. They stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guide their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning.

## **Impact**

The level of development that children are expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals (ELGs). The ELGs support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for Year 1.

There are 17 ELGs:

## **Communication and Language**

### ELG1: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

### ELG2: Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

## **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

### ELG3: Self-Regulation

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate;
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

### ELG4: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge;
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

### ELG5: Building Relationships

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers;
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

## **Physical Development**

### ELG6: Gross Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

### ELG7: Fine Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

## **Literacy**

### ELG8: Comprehension

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

### ELG9: Word Reading

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

### ELG10: Writing

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

## **Mathematics**

### ELG11: Number

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;

- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

### ELG12: Numerical Patterns

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity;
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

## **Understanding the World**

### ELG13: Past and Present

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

### ELG14: People, Culture and Communities

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

### ELG15: The Natural World

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants; Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

## **Expressive Arts and Design**

### ELG16: Creating with Materials

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;

- Make use of props and materials when role-playing characters in narratives and stories.

### ELG17: Being Imaginative and Expressive

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher;
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs;
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music

We strive to ensure that all children make good or better progress during their time in our EYFS. Children who achieve a good level of development within the ELGs have the knowledge and skills needed to continue to maintain the good progress they have made through Key Stage 1 and beyond.

As a team, we carry out internal moderation sessions and staff attend external meetings and training to ensure that we feel confident with our judgements and that these judgements are consistent with a range of other settings. In addition to observations, professional conversations take place between staff to analyse the children's progress and talk about their next steps.

We understand that when assessing children against the ELGs there will be many children awarded the same level that will be working at differing levels within this range. Effective communication between EYFS and KS1 staff is therefore crucial to achieve an effective transition for children and to plan accordingly for the next stage of their learning journey. Towards the end of their time in the Reception Class, we strive to ensure the children are Year 1 ready and fully prepared to access the National Curriculum.

### Assessment

In the first 6 weeks of starting school, the children complete the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). We also make our own informal observations through lots of playing and interacting and our findings are used to inform planning and learning opportunities to meet the needs of all of our children.

*'In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1. The Profile must reflect practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.'*

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage Department for Education 2021)

### Staffing and organisation

There is one Reception class at Hippings Methodist Primary School with a maximum intake of 30 children. There is both a full time and a part time teaching assistant. The teacher liaises closely with the teaching assistants, involving them in planning, preparation and assessment. They work together to ensure there is a timetabled rota to enable a smooth 'free flow' between indoor and outdoor learning.

All members of staff in EYFS take on the role of a Key Person.

### The use of mobile phones and cameras in EYFS

Staff are required to switch mobile phones off during lesson times and are not permitted to use them to take photographs. Recordings and photographs, taken to provide evidence of a child's learning, will be captured using school equipment such as cameras and Ipads. Images may be uploaded to the school website by authorised staff, in accordance with the school's **Safeguarding Policy**.

### EYFS to KS1 Transition

Reception class and Year 1 teachers work together to make the transition between key stages as smooth as possible. Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing/undressing and organising their personal belongings throughout EYFS. Reception children regularly meet the Year 1 teacher during assemblies, other whole school activities and informal occasions across the year. In the Summer term, Reception children have weekly story sessions in the Year 1 classroom. A transition meeting is held to discuss the individual needs of the children. An EYFS Profile, end of year class summary and report is passed on to the Year 1 class teacher.

### The Induction Process

During the month of May, parents/carers attend an information meeting to officially welcome them to our school. They are introduced to the staff who will be working alongside their children including teachers, teaching assistants, the school chaplain and kitchen staff. We take this opportunity to introduce the school's expectations and routines and to outline the induction process. We also provide ideas on how to prepare the children for the best start in full time education. Parents/carers are given a tour of the EYFS classroom and the opportunity to look at some of the resources used within class.

In June, the class teacher and the child's Key Person complete home visits to formally introduce themselves and discuss any concerns the child or family may have.

Transition records from pre-school/nursery settings and conversations between school and nursery staff inform Reception practitioners about the new intake. If necessary, the class teacher will visit the child in their nursery setting.

In July the children are invited to spend two afternoons in the EYFS classroom (one with and one without their parents/carers) to familiarise themselves with the environment and staff.

On the first day of the new school year in September, the children may arrive at school between 8.45am and 9.30am. The following day, the whole class will start together at the normal time of 8.45am.

### Home/School Links

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators who make a crucial difference to their outcomes. At Hippings Methodist Primary School, we work closely with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in school to reach their full potential from their various starting points. This home/school partnership can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

We will develop this working relationship as follows:

- We will outline the school's expectations in a Home/School Agreement.
- We will operate an 'open door' policy and members of staff will be available every morning and evening to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.
- The Seesaw interactive learning platform will be our main form of communication and each parent will have a log-in to enable them to access their child's learning journal, class announcements and to send/receive messages to/from the EYFS team.
- A summary of each week's learning will be sent via the Seesaw app.
- The class page of the school website will be updated weekly.
- We will publish a curriculum overview outlining the learning opportunities across the year.
- We will conduct workshops for parents/carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home.
- We will hold a Parents' Evening early in the year to establish how a child is settling into the school family.
- We will hold a Parents' Evening in the Spring term to establish how a child is progressing and to discuss targets and next steps.
- We will send home an official end of year report.

## Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs will receive support as appropriate to enable them to fully access the curriculum. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

Individual Teaching and Learning Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the schools **Special Educational Needs Policy**. EYFS staff discuss these targets with the child and his/her parents/carers and welcome their input into the support plan.

The school's SENDCo is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents/carers and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

In line with the school's **Equal Opportunities Policy**, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

## Policy Review

EYFS Lead: Mrs K O'Hare

Reviewed: July 2025

