



The Hesse Academy EYFS Policy

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Owner:
Assistant Head of School / EYFS Leader

Rationale

At Penshurst Primary School, we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These are:

- **playing and exploring** – Do the children investigate and experience things? Do they ‘have a go’?
- **active learning** – Do children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties? Do they enjoy their achievements?
- **creating and thinking critically** – Do children have and develop their own ideas? Do they make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things?

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based upon four principles:

- **A Unique Child** – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- **Positive Relationships** – supporting children to become strong and independent.
- **Enabling Environments** – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, home and the child.
- **Learning and Developing** – an acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

These core principles guide our practice.

A Unique Child

We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. Children are helped to understand their feelings and encouraged to express them. A cycle of observation, assessment and planning is carried out on a moment-by-moment basis, building upon the child’s interests and play. We have focus children, not focus activities for long observations.

We work in this way because:

“Babies and young children are experiencing and learning in the here and now, not storing up their questions until tomorrow or next week. It is in that moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest – the ‘teachable moment’ – that the skillful adult makes a difference. By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child’s thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children’s well-being and learning (planning for the next moment).”

(Learning, Playing and Interacting: Good Practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage p.22–23)

Positive Relationships

At Penshurst we recognise that children learn to be strong independent learners as a result of secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with all children and their families. The role of our staff is key to this process. They are there to teach. They do this through observing and interacting. Our adults know the children very well and have a sound understanding of child development. This ensures that they can enhance and extend learning at the appropriate level for each child.

As children become involved in activities of their choice, staff observe carefully, join them, when appropriate, and engage in quality interactions (teaching) to ensure progress is made. We use the observation cycle on a moment by moment basis. The focus children are given extra attention, but all the children are busy and learning all the time. The planning sheets are a record of activities that have occurred. They are blank at the start of the week and are filled gradually during the day. All adults contribute to these sheets.

We recognise that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We involve parents in their child’s learning by:

- talking to parents before their child starts at our school (through home visits, where possible); discussing our admission criteria (see Appendix 1), offering support where necessary.
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts in FS2 in order to detail how we aim to support and develop their child.
- arranging a wide variety of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, celebration assemblies, school visits and enterprise days for example.
- ensuring all parents are confident to approach our staff with any questions or concerns they may have and by providing a quiet and confidential area for them to meet with us. With this in mind, we ask all parents to understand that whilst your child is of primary concern to us, our staff have full teaching timetables.

For further details of our transition arrangements, see Appendix 2

Enabling Environments

Visitors to Penshurst Primary School EYFS comment on how engaged and purposeful the children are, as they work independently and are self - motivated. An excellent early years’ environment can support all children to be fully engaged in purposeful play of their own choice and interest. We have a workshop style environment indoors and outside. All resources are available to the children. The children select what they want to do in each area. The principle is that resources are accessible to the children and they are varied, open-ended and high quality. This gives children the opportunity to select resources to support their chosen activity.

Our children choose where to go and what to do from the moment they arrive – they initiate their own learning and adults join them and support them in their pursuits (see Appendix 3). In order to support genuine choice we have a workshop setup in both the FS1 and FS2 classes. This means that in all areas, the resources are available and accessible to the children at all times, but nothing is set out. So, therefore, the areas are clear, stocked and tidy at the start of the day. The tables and carpet areas are free of equipment but the resources are available next to these areas. We constantly review and reflect on the environment to see which areas are proving productive and which need altering.

See Appendix 5 for display policy.

Learning and Developing

Through careful assessment and observation, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas (Literacy, Maths and Personal, Social and Emotional Development). However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parent and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) in order to access additional educational support.

See Appendix 6 for the EYFS Assessment and Record keeping

APPENDIX 1

Admission Criteria

When joining us in FS1, your child should be able to:

1. Separate from their carer easily.
2. Move independently around the environment, both indoors and outdoors.
3. Stay awake throughout the session.
4. Behave appropriately (and non-aggressively) for the majority of the time.
5. Attempt to manage their own personal hygiene.

When joining us in FS2, your child should be able to:

1. Separate from their carer easily.
2. Move independently around the environment, both indoors and outdoors.
3. Stay awake throughout the session.
4. Behave appropriately (and non-aggressively) for the majority of the time.
5. Manage their own personal hygiene. This area can be supported for children with developmental delay however, it is a reasonable expectation of most 4 year old children.

APPENDIX 2

Transition into Penshurst Primary School

Children enter FS1 the term after they are three and there are entry points in September, January and April. During the term prior to a child's entrance into FS1, parents will be given the opportunity to visit the class and meet the teacher. Home visits will also be available whenever possible, particularly for those families new to the school. These enable the parents to ask questions about the FS1 and the staff to gain a greater insight into the child's needs, abilities and interests.

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into FS2, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition:

- parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any areas of further clarification they would like to discuss
- the children are invited to visits their reception class.
- members of staff from Penshurst make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition
- feeder settings are invited to an information sharing evening
- children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting.

During the final term in FS2, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on- going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can make a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are:

- meeting expected levels of development
- exceeding expected levels
- not yet reaching expected levels

Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile Report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1. Year 1 teachers also take part in a two week transition period in July with FS2 children.

APPENDIX 3

Outdoor Play

All children will be given the opportunity to play outside throughout most of the day whatever the weather. It is important that you dress your child for school appropriately: warm clothes and waterproof coat when it's cold and wet; sun hat and sun screen when it's sunny.

Children get wet, muddy and messy when they play outside. We provide protective clothing for them to wear, including wellington boots, although you can provide these things for your child if you wish. We teach children how to minimise how messy they get and they do get better at this as they get older, but it is part of their learning and development – you can't expect them not to get messed up playing in mud.

We will not compromise on allowing children to play outdoors as we believe it to be an essential component of young children's learning and development. Children must be allowed to experience the world around them in a full, messy, muddy, wet environment if they are to make useful meaning of it.

Getting wet does not cause us to catch a cold. If the cold virus is around, we will pick it up regardless of whether we are wet or dry.

APPENDIX 4

Health and Safety

There are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

In addition to this, a termly risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS Unit.

In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework 2012:

- we undertake a whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and the child's parents and/or carers is informed on the same day.
- fresh drinking water is available at all times
- children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon where appropriate and communicated from home
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks. All EYFS staff have received Level 2 Food Hygiene training
- a First Aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept. All key teaching assistants are Paediatric First Aid trained. All EYFS staff hold an Emergency First Aid at work qualification
- the Head of School is the named Behaviour Manager for the whole school with the EYFS Leader/Assistant Head are the lead Behaviour Manager for the Early Years
- we undertake a Health and Safety Policy and Procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment
- we undertake a Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedure and Policy
- we undertake a Safeguarding Policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.
- staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in getting to a child's level and playing and engaging with children at floor level.
- All technology, used to record learning observations, is the property of The Hessle Academy and as such do not leave the EYFS unit.

APPENDIX 5

EYFS Display Policy

- FS1 and FS2 will have a number line (differentiated) at child height
- FS2 will have an alphabet in their classroom
- FS1 and FS2 will have phonics reference display in their class accessible to the children (differentiated).
- FS2 will display non-decodable words
- FS1 and FS2 storage areas will be labelled and have a picture
- When displaying work, FS1 and FS2 will have full name and a brief description or an 'I can'
- FS1 and FS2 will have an Understanding of the World (UTW) display to enrich children's knowledge of cultures and diversity
- FS2 will display referenceable materials in the direct teaching space.

Appendix 6

Assessment and Record Keeping

- All children are on an assessment cycle and must be a focus child at least twice a term.
- All EYFS staff must be trained and confident using 2simple. (Software that allows the input of observations of children which link to the EYFS framework)
- Support staff document children's work on 2Simple through 'I can' statements.
- Teachers must record a detail focus child observe on each child once a term.
- Characteristics of Effective learning must be stated on a FC observation.

All observations need to contain CI, AL or FC (child initiated, adult led or focus child).