



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Approved by: Valerie Noon

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Our Philosophy

At Hollybush, all teaching staff deliver an EYFS curriculum through immersion in high quality teaching alongside an enriched environment.

Our philosophy is to nurture every child's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, developing both skills and confidence as they take their first steps on their own unique journey of lifelong learning.

At Hollybush Primary School we believe that all children deserve an education rich in awe and wonder as well as exciting and memorable experiences that allow children's natural creativity and curiosity to flourish. We focus on nurturing the whole child and their individual needs. We are a therapeutic and attachment aware school and we believe this needs to be at the core of what we do. Communication and language is at the forefront and the acquisition of skills and knowledge run alongside nature and learning outside. We believe that an education that does all of this gives our children the very best chance of becoming well-rounded, happy individuals, ready to succeed in an ever-changing world. Children enter Hollybush Primary School with varied life experiences and our aim is to plan teaching and learning opportunities that supports them all in meeting their full potential.

EYFS Curriculum

At Hollybush Primary School we follow the **EYFS Framework**. Within this framework there are four guiding principles which shape our practice.

These are:

1. Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

EYFS learning and development requirements

Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving. These are called the **prime areas**:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social, and emotional development.

Four areas help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas.

These are called the **specific areas**:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

The goal of early childhood education should be to activate the child's own natural desire to learn.

Maria Montessori

Throughout their time in our Early Years our children partake in an ambitious curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs) The descriptors for these can be found [here](#).

As previously outlined our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, learning by observing each other and through adult led activities and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow us to respond quickly to children's new interests and/or needs as we respond 'in the moment.'

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum at Hollybush are three **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.

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential.

Hollybush Primary School Early Years

Our approach is influenced by the work of educationalists, practitioners, psychologists and researchers who have guided our knowledge of how young children learn and how adults can support their learning. At Hollybush, provision is underpinned by a complementary relationship between adult led, adult-initiated and child led learning. We are ambitious in our approach using a continuous cycle of observation and assessment, planning/teaching, alongside structured and systematic lessons and adult led activities.

In Nursery we have two teaching input sessions a day followed by one planned adult led activity. All other teaching happens in the moment with next steps implemented then and there. The provision is set up to link to a need that has been identified by observation and assessment.

Our Reception children have three whole class input sessions a day covering the specific areas of literacy, maths and phonics objectives and other areas of the curriculum. Short adult led focused groups are planned for writing, reading and maths and immediately follow a shared input. These sessions are planned with care, meeting the needs of all children, using prior knowledge of the child's learning experiences and guidance from the EYFS document 'Development Matters', 2021.

Indoor and outdoor resources are organised to develop children's skills in personal interaction, independence and exploration and are linked to the needs of the children based on our observations. Resources are carefully selected in order to enhance potential for new learning and consolidate prior learning. Resources are dressed/displayed as invitations to learning or provocations to enable children to discover, experiment, explore and progress.

Continuous provision transcends all areas of learning and provides children with the opportunity to demonstrate the three characteristics of effective learning.

Children are given the freedom to make independent choices and are encouraged to be active learners and take control of their own learning.

Progress

Ensuring children are learning and making progress is fundamental. However in line with the new Development Matters we have designed a curriculum and assessment that works for our children.

We use Evidence Me to collect WOW observations, these are moments – when a child does or says something that demonstrates progress or skill in a particular area and these are shared with parents via the online system and also form part of the child's Learning Journey which is a paper record of their journey through the Early Years Foundation Stage.

With a focus on Speech and Language we also assess our children's Communication and Language development through Welcomm (Nursery) and NELI (Reception.)

We use the assessment data to inform our planning and where necessary we provide extra support for children in order for them to make accelerated progress.

The teacher's task is to first nourish and assist, to watch, encourage, guide, induce, rather than to interfere, prescribe or restrict.

Maria Montessori

The Role of the adult:

Research shows that progress will be significantly enhanced by the effective support and role models of adults within a high-quality learning environment. Within our setting interactions between children and adults will look like this:

- Tuning in to what is happening or a child's thinking.
- Showing genuine interest.
- Respecting children's own decisions and choices.
- Inviting children to elaborate.

Interact, don't interfere.

- Recapping on what has happened so far.
- Offering personal experience.
- Clarifying ideas.
- Reminding.
- Using specific praise e.g. that is a good idea because...
- Offering an alternative viewpoint.
- Speculating, using 'I wonder if...' 'What would happen if....'

The role of the environment

The importance of each adult to support progression is crucial however, we equally understand that in times when a child is on their own independent learning journey the environment plays a significant role in development.

At Hollybush the environment is the third teacher, it is flexible and responsive to the needs and development of the child. Each area of the classroom is informed by ongoing observation and assessment. As the needs of the children change, as they grow and develop, so does the environment.

We have transformed our classrooms into calm, tranquil and inclusive environments with warm lighting and soft furnishings.

We use authentic items and real resources.

We live our school value of kindness and recycle and reuse as much as possible to help protect our planet.

We have moved away from toys with a fixed purpose and have been inspired by The Curiosity Approach and Hygge. We use resources that are open ended to encourage creativity, curiosity, imagination and high order thinking skills. The use of loose parts are a fundamental part of our provision. Children become active learners who are inspired to use their creativity and imaginations to redesign, line up, take apart, put back together and combine in endless ways.

Outside we have deconstructed role play with access to logs, planks, crates and tyres. These resources can become anything and have unlimited potential.