

# **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

Amended: Summer 2023  
Adopted by the Curriculum and Inclusion Committee: Summer 2023  
Next to be reviewed: Summer 2026

## **Vision Phrase**

**‘Aim high and smile’**

We are committed to safeguarding and ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all pupils in accordance with safeguarding procedures and guidance for staff outlined in the school’s Health and Safety, Child Protection, Security and Safeguarding policies.





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# 1. Introduction

*'No job is more important than working with children in the early years... When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow'* Development Matters, 2020

## 2. Aims

Our aims, principles and pedagogy at West Hove Infant School are clearly defined in this policy which fully supports the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS). This provides every child with the best possible start by laying a secure foundation for future learning. The EYFS features of effective practice, which guide our work, are grouped into seven distinct but complementary themes:

- **The best for every child**

This details that all children deserve to have an equal chance of success and high-quality early education is good for all children. It is especially important for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. We know that children who have lived through difficult experiences can begin to grow stronger when they experience high quality early education and care. High-quality early education and care is by its nature inclusive. Children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. All children promptly receive any extra help they need, so they can progress well in their learning.

- **High-quality care**

The child's experience must always be central to the thinking of every practitioner. High-quality care is consistent and every practitioner needs to enjoy spending time with young children. Practitioners know that starting school, and all the other transitions in the early years, are big steps for small children and care for these steps in a nurturing way.

- **The curriculum**

The curriculum is a top-level plan of everything the early years setting wants the children to learn. Planning to help every child to develop their language is vital. The curriculum is ambitious and careful sequencing helps children to build their learning over time. Young children's learning is often driven by their interests and so plans need to be flexible. Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way.

- **Pedagogy: helping children to learn**

Children are powerful learners and every child can make progress in their learning, with the right help. Effective pedagogy is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching. Practitioners carefully organise enabling environments for high-quality play. Sometimes, they make time and space available for children to invent their own play. Sometimes, they join in to sensitively support and extend children's learning. Children in the early years also learn through group work, when practitioners guide their learning. Older children need more of this guided learning. A well-planned learning environment, indoors and outside, is an important aspect of pedagogy

- **Assessment**

Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. Effective assessment requires practitioners to understand child development. Practitioners also need to be clear about what they want children to know and be able to do. Accurate assessment can highlight whether a child needs extra support, or challenge in their learning.

- **Self-regulation and executive function**

Language development is central to self-regulation: children use language to guide their actions and plans. Executive function includes the child's ability to: – hold information in mind – focus their attention – think flexibly – inhibit impulsive behaviour. These abilities contribute to the child's growing ability to self-regulate: – concentrate their thinking – plan what to do next – monitor what they are doing and adapt – regulate strong feelings – be patient for what they want – bounce back when things get difficult.

- **Partnership with families**

It is important for our families in our early years community to have a strong and respectful partnership. This sets the scene for children to thrive in the early years. This includes listening regularly to children's parents and carers and giving clear information about their child's progress. The help that parents give their children at home has a very significant impact on their learning.

The EYFS also has three separate strands of learning, defined as the 'Characteristics of Early Learning':

- Playing and exploring, or, engagement
- Active learning, or, motivation
- Creating and thinking critically, or, thinking

In tandem the features of effective practice and the characteristics of learning ensure that our curriculum provision gives our children the best start to their education.

### **3.Intent**

At Hove Learning Federation, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We also recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.

As practitioners we also recognise that children enter school with a range of experiences and attainment. We aim to provide a rich and stimulating learning experience for all children that will embody our EYFS principles.

We do this by:

- Having the needs of children at the centre of all we do.
- Fostering high self-esteem and self-confidence in every child.
- Providing a rich, meaningful and integrated curriculum that excites and motivates.

- Providing a secure, happy and stimulating setting in which a child can learn effectively.
- Learning is made exciting, creative, meaningful and fun in both indoor and outdoor contexts so children remain motivated, interested, fully involved and active.
- Reflecting on practice in order to continually improve the quality of our learning and teaching.
- Enabling every child to develop the positive attitudes and skills necessary to empower them to reach their full potential as thinkers and learners.
- Including each child as an individual, acknowledging and providing for their different needs.
- Everyone is valued and celebrated for their individuality, uniqueness and their achievement and progress
- Developing a close and effective partnership with parents/carers and the wider community.
- There is a close and mutually supportive partnership between school, home and other agencies, sharing information and working collaboratively in the best interests of the child and their family.

## **4. Content**

Expectations:	Strategies:
<p>Development Matters 2020 curriculum is used to support planning in the following ways:</p>	<p><b><u>Long Term planning</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Early Years Development Framework informs the Curriculum Map, which forms the basis of our long term planning and ensures the coverage of all areas.</li> <li>• It covers the seven areas of learning, making reference to the Early Learning Goals from the Development Matters Guidance.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Medium Term planning</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each half term there is a new topic that provides the context for learning.</li> <li>• Each of the seven areas of learning progress children's skills, for example learning about changes of state by making porridge (linked to Goldilocks and the Three Bears). This Termly Overview is revisited and revised each half term.</li> <li>• A weekly overview is used to ensure that there are explicit links in the learning.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Short Term planning</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each week there are plans for each area of learning, in greater detail for guided whole class, group sessions and independent learning activities.</li> <li>• The Literacy and Mathematics plan includes three adult-led, whole class inputs per week. The Phonics plan includes five adult-led, whole class inputs per week. Other adult-led inputs cover the other areas of learning.</li> <li>• Each week, children partake in an adult-led writing task, Number, or Numerical Pattern based task. They also partake in a minimum</li> </ul>

	<p>of two adult led reading tasks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short term plans also include a classroom environment plan and plans for the outside classroom activities. These reflect and are linked to the current teaching inputs and children's interests.</li> </ul>
<b>Play based learning is at the heart of our approach to learning</b>	<p>Play based learning is a fundamental part of the learning process in the foundation stage. Through play based learning children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. Both indoor and outdoor environments are equipped to support children's learning through guided activities as well as opportunities for spontaneous self-initiated learning. Through play, in a secure and safe environment and with effective adult support, children can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world</li> <li>• Practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills</li> <li>• Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules</li> <li>• Take risks and make mistakes</li> <li>• Think creatively and imaginatively</li> <li>• Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems</li> </ul>
<b>The learning environment acts a third teacher, inviting children to engage and develop their knowledge and skills through engaging, age appropriate provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We place equal value on our indoor and outside learning environments.</li> <li>• We provide the children with stimulating, well-organised and accessible learning areas. All areas and resources are clearly labelled. Displays are interactive, highly stimulating and are encouraged to be used as an interactive resource.</li> <li>• The learning environment makes provision for all seven areas of learning. All areas are equally important and interdependent to support a balanced and holistic approach to child development. Learning is delivered through planned, purposeful activities, with a balance of adult-led and child initiated activities.</li> </ul>
<b>All areas of the EYFS curriculum are represented through the daily provision in inside and outside classrooms</b>	<p>The seven areas of learning are divided into prime and specific areas. Prime areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas.</p> <p><b>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision for Personal, Social and Emotional Development is divided into the following areas: Building Relationships; Managing Self; Self-Regulation. Children are provided with experiences and support which will help them to develop a positive sense of themselves and of others.</li> <li>• Children are encouraged to take risks, make mistakes and learn how to relate to others socially. We also encourage the children to become independent and self-reliant within the setting through scaffolding of behaviour. Children are also supported in developing an understanding of making healthy choices and how to stay safe.</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication and Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision for Communication and Language is divided into the following two areas: Listening, Attention and Understanding and Speaking.</li> </ul>

- Children are given numerous opportunities for speaking and listening, drama, and role-play, throughout their learning environment. Explicit teaching sessions, listening to stories and information books are a daily occurrence.

### **Physical Development**

- Physical Development is divided into the following areas: Gross Motor Skills; Fine Motor Skills.
- Children's motor skills, both fine and gross, are developed and supported throughout every area of our curriculum. Our specific foci on this area include regular P.E. sessions, Write Dance sessions, explicit fine motor skill teaching and handwriting. This develops good control in children coordination and balance, enabling them to be successful learners.

### **Literacy**

- Provision for Literacy Development is divided into the following areas: Word reading; Comprehension; Writing.
- Word reading and Comprehension are taught through daily Phonics sessions, whole class shared reading, daily guided reading sessions in small groups, 1:1 reading with parent volunteers and teachers as well as a text rich environment.
- Children have exposure to many forms of writing to give them a wide experience of reading both for pleasure and for information.
- Writing in the Early Years is developed initially through our daily Phonics sessions and explorations into mark making. We ensure that all of our environments have opportunities for purposeful and meaningful writing.

### **Mathematics**

- Provision for Mathematics is divided into the following areas: Numbers and Numerical Patterns.
- Children develop their understanding of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy in a range of contexts. Opportunities are planned for children to explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about their developing understanding.
- We teach mathematics using the Maths Mastery approach.

### **Understanding the World**

- Understanding the World is divided into the following areas: People, Cultures and Communities; The Natural World; Past and Present.
- Children explore these areas of learning through opportunities to use a range of tools safely; encounter creatures, plants, and objects in their natural environment and to learn about people.
- Children undertake practical experiments and work with a range of materials. Children are encouraged be inquisitive and develop an understanding that will help them make sense of the world.
- They are encouraged to use all of their senses to learn about the world around them and to make connections between new information and what they already know.

### **Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)**

- Expressive Arts and Design is divided into the following areas: Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being Expressive enables children to represent their experiences in a range of mediums, demonstrating their understanding of ideas and concepts through Art, Music, Drama, Design, Role-Play and Dance.</li> <li>• Through Creating with Materials, children are provided with opportunities to learn and practice skills needed to create pictures and models in a variety of mediums.</li> </ul>
<b>Inspirational and relatable role models are referred to and taught.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key historical and present figures are taught throughout the year</li> <li>• A range of people from sports, the arts, STEM and political backgrounds are explored through stories and age appropriate sessions, linked to the person's area of specialism</li> <li>• A balance of gender, ethnicity, ability and careers are represented for a real-world view of Britain and abroad.</li> <li>• Aspirational figures are always introduced through the key traits of perseverance and kindness.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability is taught.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability is woven into many aspects of our Early Learning stage. From children recycling or re-using scrap paper, to composting their snack scraps in our wormery, children are engaged in their own sustainability from their first days in our community.</li> <li>• Specific sustainability issues such as ocean pollution are taught in topic related, age appropriate ways.</li> <li>• Eco-Club runs for children in the Infant stage, as well as eco-councillors who care for our environment, always striving for better.</li> </ul>

## 5. Assessment

A child's learning and development over the year, is assessed against the Development Matters Guidance. Assessment is gathered through a range of means, such as observations, adult-led activities, children's independent learning and adult-initiated tasks. Information from parents/carers or other settings are also used to inform assessments.

<b>Expectations:</b>	<b>Strategies:</b>
<b>Formative assessment is continually on going to support our understanding of children's progress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formative assessment is a child-centred approach to developing their learning through open and on-going communication.</li> <li>• Learning intentions and success criteria are shared with children in appropriate language in each adult-led session and guided activity.</li> <li>• Observations of children's interests and fascinations are used to inform and adapt future environment plans.</li> </ul>
<b>Summative assessments are made in half termly cycles, culminating in a final assessment that marks the end of the EYFS curriculum.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the induction period, children are assessed against the stages of Development Matters Guidance.</li> <li>• These outcomes are entered into Target Tracker, which is updated half-termly, when each cycle of summative assessment is completed. This data is then used to build a picture of what children know, understand and can do over the course of the</li> </ul>

	<p>year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We use this evidence, in conjunction with teacher led tasks, independent learning, and the teacher's in-depth knowledge of the child, to inform half-termly and end of year assessments.</li> <li>• Phonics knowledge and skills, including High frequency Word recognition are assessed regularly. At the end of each phase, the Team Leader will gather this data and use it to inform next steps in support and challenge for all learners.</li> <li>• The evidence collected over the course of the year informs the teacher's final decision in the Summer Term as to whether the child has met the Early Learning Goal for each area of learning. The organisation of the EYFS profile is as follows:</li> </ul> <p>-A child assessed as 'Emerging' is working towards the Early Learning Goal in that area.</p> <p>-A child assessed as 'Expected' is secure in the Early Learning Goal for that area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As well as each individual area being assessed, we also observe and gather evidence towards the Characteristics of Learning (Development Matters). This forms the basis of our school reports to parents and carers and helps teacher's to make informed decisions about children's capabilities as learners.</li> <li>• The children who achieve expected for all the Prime Areas, Literacy and Mathematics are judged as having a 'Good Level of Development', or GLD.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment is gathered in a range of ways</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations of children demonstrating their knowledge and skills are made continuously.</li> <li>• Practitioners record their observations on Portal, Interactive Learning Diary. This is shared with parents and carers, who can add their own observations of their child at home.</li> </ul>

## 7. Outdoor learning

We are committed to enabling children to engage in as much outdoor learning as possible because the outdoors provides a unique context for learning. The outdoors environment also gives children many opportunities to expand the scope and freedom of learning in ways that is not possible indoors. We give equal value to our indoor and outdoor classrooms. We also utilise our Saplings classroom for a unique learning experience in an outdoor setting. See: Saplings policy for more information.

<b>Expectations:</b>	<b>Strategies:</b>
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<b>A cohesively planned curriculum that incorporates the use of the school grounds and Saplings outdoor classroom are used for learning about the natural world</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outdoor learning curriculum is divided into three distinct areas</li> <li>• Nature study – study of animals, plants, seasons and weather.</li> <li>• Den building, collaborative games and map making</li> <li>• Growing</li> </ul>
<b>Timetabled sessions for all children to work in the school grounds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children have at least one session per week in the Saplings outdoor classroom. This is planned, structured time where they learn new knowledge and practise a variety of skills needed to support our wildlife and plants in our local environment and climate</li> </ul>
<b>Year round access to our outdoor classrooms ensure children have free-flow between the learning environments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outdoor classrooms are resourced with activities and toys that reflect the learning themes of the week</li> <li>• The outdoor classrooms complement, but do not duplicate, the learning occurring inside the class</li> <li>• Seasonal changes bring unique learning opportunities for children in the outside classroom. From harvesting apples in the autumn, to observing bees harvesting pollen in the summer. The richness of outdoor learning cannot be underestimated</li> </ul>

## 7. Skills

<b>Expectations:</b>	<b>Strategies:</b>
<b>Key skills for each subject are embedded in each lesson and unit and carefully mapped out across the school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key skills are taught alongside the knowledge acquisition aspect of the lesson</li> <li>• Practical opportunities to practise a range of skills taught in class are available in the environment. These range from practising fine motor skills by using tweezers to move objects, to practising printing skills using malleable objects.</li> <li>• Learning objectives are based on skill acquisition and children are given opportunities to discuss and assess their confidence with the acquisition of these skills</li> </ul>
<b>Skills are recorded throughout the year in children's learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject specific skills are included in the corresponding Progression Ladder document.</li> <li>• Evidence in Learning Journeys and on the ILD Portal show how children use and apply taught skills successfully in their time at school.</li> </ul>
<b>Children with SEN or with EAL know the variety of skills they are using to develop their knowledge and understanding with support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate support is given to children with SEN and EAL so they can access the learning and understand the skills they are learning to become successful.</li> <li>• Makaton and layered language is used to help children to access learning new skills.</li> <li>• Challenge partners are used to ensure children with SEN and or EAL are provided with opportunities to have language modelled and practise their speaking skills in whole class learning. All</li> </ul>

	<p>adults in the room know their EAL and SEN children and as such can provide dynamic and responsive support for their skill acquisition in the classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities provided ensure children with SEN or EAL can access tasks appropriately and share their skills, knowledge and understanding</li> <li>• Differentiation and scaffolds are included where appropriate to enable access to learning and ensure children make at least expected progress.</li> </ul>
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## 8. Knowledge and Vocabulary

Expectations:	Strategies:
<b>Subject specific vocabulary is linked to each unit and mapped into our planning, Topic teasers and classroom provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New vocabulary is introduced in stages with added visuals and/or sign language to support children's vocabulary acquisition. Children are encouraged to assess their own work and those of their peers in age-appropriate ways using the school's marking policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Vocabulary is included in each session and progression across sessions and year groups is evident</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary explicitly taught during whole class teaching inputs, with layered visuals and Makaton symbols to assist language acquisition.</li> <li>• Children are given time to hear and say key vocabulary</li> <li>• Key vocabulary and 'magical words' are displayed in the classroom, showing the progress of children's vocabulary throughout the year</li> </ul>
<b>Misconceptions in knowledge and vocabulary are picked up early and addressed within lessons or before the subsequent lesson.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers plan for misconceptions to ensure correct knowledge and vocabulary is taught and understood each lesson.</li> <li>• Adults are confident to pick up on misconceptions in knowledge and vocabulary that the children may have and ensure these are addressed early and clearly.</li> <li>• 'Grumpy Frog' is used on flips in to pre-empt possible misconceptions and address these to support whole class knowledge and understanding</li> </ul>

## 9. Equal opportunities, inclusion and access

We believe it is our responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference – not only so each child is included and not disadvantaged, but also so that they learn from an early age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society.

We focus on each child's individual learning, development and care needs and remove or help to overcome barriers for children, where they exist. We identify children who may need extra support in school in consultation with parents and carers.

Children who have English as an additional language (EAL) are sometimes supported by bi-lingual assistants and the EMAS service.

## **12. Working in partnership with parents and carers**

At West Hove Infants, we recognise the importance of clear and consistent communication between home and school. As such we undertake the following:

- New Parents Meeting in the Summer Term for September entrants.
- A story session in the Summer Term for new pupils and their Class Teacher.
- A parent/carer meeting with Class Teachers before the child starts school.
- 'Welcome to Reception' meeting in the Autumn Term provides opportunities to learn more about the children's learning.
- Phonics and Reading workshop for parents and carers in the Autumn term. These are to inform parents how we teach these areas and how best to support at home.
- Termly parent and carer consultations to discuss the child's progress and development.
- Our 'open door' policy where parents/carers are able to talk to their child's teachers about any concerns they may have.
- Parent access to Portal: Interactive Learning Diary. Parents can see what their children have been learning at school and contribute to this.

Every effort is made to keep a continuous dialogue with parents and carers and we inform them of their child's learning in numerous ways, such as:

- Home/school Learning diaries
- Topic Teasers are sent via 'Ping' and made available on our school website each half term
- Half-Termly website updates on our current learning, including visits and visitors.
- Any special information is sent home via School Ping or email.

Written reports are sent home at the end of the Summer Term, based on the Characteristics of Learning. The parents and carers also receive the child's attainment in each of the areas of learning.

## **11. Transition**

Welcoming children into their first year of school life sets the tone for their educational career and as such it is essential that it is a successful and positive experience for everyone involved. Therefore we ensure that transition is a seamless process and that it builds on previous experience.

We conduct transition in the following ways:

### **Pre-School Links and Liaison**

We have an exceptionally large number of nurseries and pre-schools that feed into our community. We have excellent links with our local pre-schools and nurseries. In the Summer Term, Team leaders make visits to as many provisions as possible to meet our new children. If a visit in person is not possible, a phone call is made to discuss the children joining us. The nurseries and pre-schools are invited to our open mornings in the Summer Term to spend time in the school environment alongside the current Reception children. Every feeder pre-school and nursery setting is made aware that we also have school information on our website, which they can share with their children.

### **Transfer process – Pre-school into Reception**

Our transition into Reception happens as follows:

- Parent and carers attend a welcome meeting in the Summer Term to learn about West Hove Infant School.
- Children are invited to story time in July to meet their new teacher and teaching assistant.
- Children are given a 'Marvellous Me' pamphlet to fill out to tell their new teacher all about them.
- Meetings between families and their class teacher to share information occur in the first few days of the Autumn Term.
- Children start school in small groups of six-eight to ensure a smooth transition. This provides time and space for children and adults to settle by getting to know each other and their classroom.

### **Transition process – Reception into Year One**

Our transition into Year One happens as follows:

- Classes are mixed into new class sets for the start of year One. Children spend time with their new classmates and, where possible, their Year One teacher.
- In the Summer Term, our PSED learning focuses on transition and change.
- In the Summer Term children gain more experience of working at a directed task independently.
- In the Summer Term, Year R children gain experience of Year 1 activities eg. Having lunch in the canteen (SR), playtime.
- Reception and Year One teachers have a joint moderation of Reception Reading, Writing and Maths to ensure teachers have a shared understanding of attainment.
- Teachers meet to share information about the children in the Summer Term and again in the Autumn term.
- Parents/carers invited in September to a 'Welcome to Year One' meeting where the routines of Year One are explained.
- Children achieving "Emerging" are identified by Year One teachers and appropriate provision is planned for these children's needs. This includes appropriate access to the outside environment.