



**Hartford Primary School**

**Early Years**

**Foundation Stage**

**Policy**

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**Signature of Headteacher:**

**Signature of Chair of Governors:**

## **Hartford Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile  
Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

The Early Years (EY) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us, at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

The EY is based upon four principles:

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

### **A Unique Child**

At Hartford Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Hartford Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Early Years we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, and children of different ethnic groups. We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the school are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

### **Welfare**

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.”

At Hartford Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2007.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
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We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Hartford Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

#### **Parents as Partners**

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 do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- Regular visits to see children in their pre-school setting prior to their starting school;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during "Story and Rhyme Time" sessions and two half day visits.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' electronically;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year when parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress in private with the teacher.
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Stay and Play Sessions, Class assemblies, phonics drop in sessions, reading meetings and Sports Day etc;
- Providing parental access to their Child's 'Learning Journey' throughout the year to ensure parents can add comments relating to the children's achievements adding to their learning.

All staff involved with the EY team aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At Hartford Primary School the EY Lead teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EY, supported by teaching staff and Teaching Assistants. We have good links with our Preschool providers. EY teacher meets with staff to discuss new intake children. Staff and children from preschool are regular invited to school events (class assemblies in the Summer Term, Sports Day's and moderation meetings etc.).

## **Enabling Environments**

At Hartford Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

The Planning within the EY follows the child's learning which are based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EY teachers as a guide for weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EY takes the form of child observations, child initiated work and teacher led activities. This involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual 'Learning Journey's'. They also contain information provided by parents.

At Hartford Primary School, we use the eProfile to record judgements against the EY Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against 17 assessment scales derived from the ELG's. Within the final term of the EY, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EY teacher.

## **The Learning Environment**

The EY classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and located equipment and resources independently. The EYFS class has its own enclosed outdoor area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore use their senses and be physically active. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 6 areas of learning.

## **Learning and Development**

At Hartford Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter connected.

## **Teaching and Learning Style**

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EY just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2. Features that relate to the EY are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EY;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

## **Play**

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.” Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 2008

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

## **Active Learning**

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

### **Creativity and Critical Thinking**

When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

### **Areas of Learning**

The EYFS is made up of six areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EY.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the EY teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EY. This governor will discuss EY practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.