



'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their 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.'

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

#### Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to children from birth to five years of age. At Hurst Knoll St James Nursery children are admitted from the term after they turn three years of age into nursery. There is a September intake.

The early year's experiences we offer our children are based on the following principles:

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

**At Hurst Knoll St James' we aim to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children by:**

- setting the standards for the learning, development and care of young children
- providing for equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- creating the framework for partnership by working with parents, professionals and all settings that the child attends
- ensuring that learning and development is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child and informed by the use of on-going observational assessment.

#### Play

At Hurst Knoll St James' we recognise that play underpins all learning and development for young children. Most children play spontaneously although some may need adult support. It is through play that children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. By providing well planned experiences based on children's spontaneous play, both indoors and outside we support our children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside and with other children and adults as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

#### Unique child

At Hurst Knoll St James' we give every child the opportunity to achieve their best. We have realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children across the areas of learning and development. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with disabilities, children with additional educational needs, children with medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children by:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, skills, experience and interests
- planning opportunities to develop their well being, self-esteem and confidence, including experiences that provide risk and challenge
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a secure and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is respected and valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination or stereotyping
- planning challenging and appropriate experiences for higher achieving children
- monitoring children's progress and providing additional support when identified

- using age appropriate ways to seek the views of all children through observing, listening and sensitive discussion
- seeking advice from specialist agencies where appropriate.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Hurst Knoll St James' we believe that the positive relationships we build are the key to effective partnerships between all practitioners, parents, carers and families. Each child has a key person, i.e. the person with whom they form a special attachment. The key person is responsible for ensuring that the child feels safe and cared for, in order to develop a positive sense of well-being and achievement.

### **We meet the needs of all of our children by:**

- working with parents / carers right from the start to find out about their child's needs, feelings and interests
- developing effective partnerships with families throughout the year by offering regular opportunities for them to talk about their child's progress
- encouraging families to talk to their child's key person, as well as other staff members to foster two way communication with parents / carers and families
- helping parents to support children's learning and development
- recognising that friendships and relationships are an important part of a child's development from birth.

### **Enabling Environments**

At Hurst Knoll St James' our environment is carefully planned both indoors and outdoors to help children achieve across all aspects of the EYFS. Opportunities are provided for children to take part in a wide range of experiences and to extend their interests.

### **We meet the needs of all of our children by:**

- Encouraging children to communicate and talk about their experiences
- developing children's independence and decision making by providing an environment where children can freely access resources and select from the experiences on offer
- using the outdoor environment on a regular / daily basis to enhance learning and development.
- analysing children's responses to different situations and identifying their future learning needs
- using materials and equipment that reflects both the community that the children come from and the wider world
- encouraging a positive attitude to learning by ensuring our planning begins by observing the children in order to consider their current interests, developmental stage and learning style.

We plan to build on what the children know, understand and can do.

At Hurst Knoll St James' we work in partnership with parents / carers, other settings, other professionals and with individuals and groups in the community to support children's learning and development. When children start at our setting children are invited to visit for short play sessions and parents are welcomed to stay and play as they wish.

### **Learning and Development**

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of Learning and Development:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts & Design

All of the areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led (child working with the adult) and child-initiated (child chosen) activities, both indoors and outdoors.

At Hurst Knoll St James' we ensure that the requirements of the EYFS are met through all seven areas of learning and development, in order for children to make progress towards the early learning goals, which are the established expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

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

Children are provided with experiences and support to help them develop a positive sense of themselves and of others; respect for others; social skills; and a positive disposition to learn. Children's emotional well-being is supported to help them to know themselves and what they can do. We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- forming warm, caring attachments
- establishing constructive relationships with parents, with everyone in the setting/school and with professionals from other agencies
- acting as positive role models and taking account of different needs and expectations
- building children's confidence to take manageable risks in their play providing support and planning experiences that offer challenges
- giving encouragement and appropriate praise
- planning opportunities for children to play by themselves, in pairs and groups and support the development of independence skills and a positive attitude to learning
- providing time and space for children to concentrate on experiences and to develop their own interests
- establishing opportunities for play and learning acknowledging children's particular religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds
- provide positive images that challenge children's thinking and help them to embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, additional educational needs and disability.

### **Communication and Language/Literacy**

Children's learning and competence in communicating, speaking and listening, being read to and beginning to read and write is supported and extended. Children are provided with opportunities and encouragement to use their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes, and are supported to develop the confidence and disposition to do so. We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- supporting children to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings and building relationships with adults and each other
- providing daily opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books, rhymes, music, songs, stories and poetry
- identifying and responding to particular difficulties in children's language development at an early stage
- providing positive role models by reading and writing and showing children what can be written and read
- talking with and listening to children to engage them in conversation
- linking language with physical movement in action songs, rhymes, role play and practical experiences, for example, cooking and gardening
- planning an environment that is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers, words, rhymes, books and pictures that takes into account children's different interests, understandings, home backgrounds and cultures
- showing awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of children learning English as an additional language, using their home language, where possible
- providing time and relaxed opportunities for children to develop spoken language through sustained conversations between adults and children, both in one to one and in small groups and between children themselves.

## **Mathematics**

Children are supported to develop their understanding of Mathematics in a broad range of contexts in which they explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about their developing understanding. They are provided with opportunities to practise and extend their skills in these areas and to gain confidence and competence in their use. We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- developing mathematical understanding through all children's early experiences including songs, stories, games and imaginative play
- encouraging and valuing children's exploration of real life problems
- using mathematics as an integral part of daily experiences, modelling and encouraging child participation
- providing time, space, resources and encouragement to discover new words and mathematical ideas.

## **Understanding the World**

Children are supported to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. Their learning is supported by offering opportunities to use a range of tools safely; encounter creatures, people, plants and objects in their natural environments and in real-life situations; undertaking practical "experiments"; and work with a range of materials. We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- creating a stimulating environment that offers a range of experiences to encourage children's curiosity and interest
- making effective use of outdoors, including the local neighbourhood
- inviting families and carers to share their experiences of the wider world
- using correct terms / vocabulary and asking open ended questions
- planned opportunities are based on first hand experiences that encourage exploration, experimentation, observation, problem solving, prediction, critical thinking, decision making and discussion
- encouraging children to talk about and reflect upon their experiences
- supporting children's use of ICT.

## **Physical Development**

The physical development of young children is encouraged through the provision of opportunities for them to be active and interactive and to improve their skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. They are encouraged and supported 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. Children are supported to develop an understanding of the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food and lifestyle. We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- valuing children's natural and spontaneous movements, through which they are finding out about their bodies and motivating them to be active
- providing a range of equipment and resources that are challenging and interesting and can be used in a variety of ways to support the development of specific skills
- introducing vocabulary to children alongside their actions
- supporting children to understand about good health, for example, use of sunscreens, sleeping, hygiene, eating and exercise
- providing space and time for children to engage in energetic play, to set their own challenges, persist and practice
- providing opportunities to take controlled risks, e.g.: climbing higher than they have previously in order to develop their physical skills

### **Expressive Arts & Design**

Children's creativity is extended with practitioner support to develop their curiosity, exploration and play. Children are provided with opportunities to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings, for example, through a variety of art, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role-play experiences, mathematics and design and technology. We achieve this in a variety of ways:

- valuing what children can do and children's own ideas
- providing a stimulating environment where creativity, originality and expressiveness are valued
- allowing time for children to explore and express their ideas in a variety of ways

### **Continuing Professional Development**

In order to keep up to date, broaden our understanding and learn new skills, all practitioners at Hurst Knoll St James' receive regular training. The identification of training needs of all adults is part of an on-going process.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers and teaching assistants to understand and adhere to the principles stated in this policy. The SLT will monitor implementation of this policy as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

**Agreed by the Governors Summer 2016**