Early Years Policy

Harvington C of E First and Nursery School

Written by: Laura Poole
Reviewed: September 2026
Governors responsibility: Early Years
Date approved by Governors: September 2026

At Harvington C of E First and Nursery School the term 'Early Years' to include all those children working within the Foundation Stage. This generally includes children in Nursery and Reception but may include children beyond Reception who have not yet completed the Early Years Profile.

Aims and Principles

Our EYFS policy is directly related to our school vision, values and school development plan.
It documents further aims and strategies we employ in order to address the four overarching principles of EYFS:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independently through positive relationships.
- 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.
- The importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. Our practice follows the Early Years Framework and covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Effective Practice in relation to each of the four overarching principles of EYFS, the seven key features of effective practice and the characteristics of effective teaching and learning is detailed in the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (link below):
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a5f8e4fb00f3323bf1a23a1/EYFS_group_and_school_based_from_September_2026.pdf

The Areas of Learning and Development

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the EYFS statutory framework. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected sections. The prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The 3 Prime Areas are:

● **Communication and language:**
Listening, attention and understanding
Speaking
● **Physical development:**
Gross motor skills
Fine motor skills
● **Personal, social and emotional development:**
Self-regulation
Managing self
Building relationships

The Prime Areas are strengthened and applied through 4 Specific Areas:

- **Literacy:**

Comprehension
Word reading
Writing

- **Mathematics:**

Numbers
Numerical patterns

- **Understanding the world:**

Past and present
People, culture and communities

- **Expressive arts and design:**

Creating with materials
Being imaginative and expressive

Both Nursery and Reception have a long-term curriculum plan; it is planned around a series of themes. Each theme lasts for a half term. The staff work together to develop a series of activities within each theme that cover the requirements of the seven areas of learning within the Foundation stage. Subject leaders set specific knowledge and skills that are to be covered within each half term to ensure sequence of learning and progression throughout school.
As part of our literacy plan, Phase 1 Letters and Sounds is taught in Nursery and in Reception ELS phonics (Essential Letters and Sounds) is taught. In Reception we follow 'Drawing Club' to develop language, writing, speaking and listening skills.
In Reception reading books and flashcards are sent home for children to practise their phonic skills and sight reading skills. We ask parents/carers to practise with their child each day and to record their reading in their message books.

We recognise that teaching can take place at all times of the day through directed teaching sessions, through times of play and inside and outside the classroom. Children in Nursery and Reception will have the opportunity to experience a range of whole class and small group teaching sessions as well as exploring learning through the continuous provision activities on offer.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe behaviours children use in order to learn. To learn well, children must approach opportunities with curiosity, energy and enthusiasm. Effective learning must be meaningful to a child, so that they are able to use what they have learned and apply it in new situations. These abilities and attitudes of strong learners will support them to learn well and make good progress in all the Areas of Learning and Development.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

- 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'

Admissions and Transfer

Places

The Nursery is a purpose built, 30-place nursery, attached to the school. Within Nursery there is a nursery manager and deputy manager and other nursery staff depending on the number of children to fulfil ratio requirements.

Within Reception, our pupil admissions number is 30. For a class of 30, there is a Reception teacher and teaching assistant. Extra adult support will be put in place depending on the needs of the cohort.

Admission to Nursery

Children can start in Nursery from 2 years and 9 months. Nursery offers a taster session on the first Friday of every month where parents/ carers may stay with their children to begin to get to know the staff and routines.

There is a thorough induction process which includes:

- A Taster Session in Nursery prior to starting, arranged in advance, accompanied by a parent or carer (this is especially encouraged during the term before the child is due to start).
- A meeting for parents/ carers before their child is due to start where a transition form is completed.
- Each parent / carer is given a nursery pack providing relevant information as well as clear instructions and forms for booking sessions within Nursery, Early Birds Breakfast Club and Wrappers after school care.
- Information for new starters is provided on the school website.
- A welcome pack for the children

Admission/Transfer to Reception

- Parents/carers apply for a school place via the County website.
- Once places have been allocated by County, the admissions process begins.
- Information for new starters is provided on the school website.
- All parents/carers are invited to a Welcome Meeting held in the summer term prior to entry into the Reception class
- A welcome pack for the children will be provided
- Children are invited to attend two transition sessions in school during the summer term
- The Reception teacher will also visit the child in their pre-school setting where a transition form will be completed.
- During the Autumn term, the children come in for shorter sessions entry during the first week.
- From week 2 all children are attending full time unless there are specific circumstances, which are agreed between parent/carer and the Reception Teacher.

Structure of the day

Nursery

8.40am - The Nursery gate is opened and parents/ carers and children are welcomed into the Nursery.
8.50am- Gates close
9:00am-Register and carpet activity
9.15am-Focus Activities and Continuous Provision
10:00am-Snack time-fruit, milk or water will be served during this group time
11:50am – Morning session collected, lunch session in hall, afternoon session arrive.
12:30pm- Children return to nursery for playtime.
1:00pm-Afternoon session begins
2.55pm-3pm-Afternoon session collected or transfer to Wrappers.

Reception

8:30am– Arrive, register and lunch orders
8:45am-Collective worship
9:00am –10:15am-Focus activity and continuous provision
10:15am–Snack time-milk, water, fruit
10:40am –Focus activity and continuous provision
11:55am– Lunch
1:00pm – Focus activities and continuous provision
3:00pm-Home time

The weekly timetable also includes activities linked to the topic, a PE session and Forest School activities.

Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them. We create a high-quality welcoming and safe setting where children can learn and grow in confidence by:

- Ensuring safer recruitment procedures are in place and followed
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers have an enhanced DBS check and references and do not start work in the setting until they have been seen by school staff
- Ensuring safeguarding procedures that state how to spot and log safeguarding concerns (see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy)
- Ensure all staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates and read Part One of KCSIE in full
- Ensure procedures are in place for staff to share allegations/concerns over other staff members (see Staff Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing policies)
- Ensure policy for acceptable use of technology
- Ensure staff induction which includes safeguarding training
- Ensure parent/carer consent is received before sharing photos
- Ensure absence procedures are in place (phone call with home visit if no contact made)
- Trained DSL and deputy DSL always available to staff
- Children will be handed over to agreed adults at collection time

Staffing

All staff are recruited following the safer recruitment procedures and cannot start work until their Enhanced DBS and references are through. All staff receive an induction which includes safeguarding before starting work.

In Nursery the ratios are as follows:
Children aged 2 years 9 moths-3 years=1:5
Children aged 3-4=1:8

All qualifications are checked to ensure they are approved and meet the criteria as set out in the Early Years Qualification Requirements and Standards document and fulfil the ratio requirements. All Nursery staff have a paediatric first aid qualification as well as one Reception staff member. All staff as of September 2026 have received anaphylaxis training through Allergy Wise. All EYFS staff have food hygiene training.

Organisation (classes/ groups)

Each child in Nursery will be allocated a key worker. This key worker will be responsible for assessing the child and identifying next steps as well as making links with the family and providing support where needed. The key worker will inform the SENCo of any concerns so that extra support can be put in place. In Reception all children are in one class together, the class teacher and teaching assistant will work with and assess all children. Sometimes work will be as a whole class, sometimes in small groups and sometimes on a 1:1 basis.

Snack and Lunchtime Arrangements

Drinking water is available to the children during the whole of the session. The children are given fruit at snack time. They are encouraged to wash their hands before snack. Milk is also offered to children and this is provided free of charge for all children under five. Parents/carers of children over five are given the opportunity to buy milk.

The Nursery children may either order a hot meal (to be ordered and paid via Parent Pay) at lunchtime or bring a lunchbox (this should contain an ice pack). We are a nut free school and parents/carers have guidelines about the food that can be sent into school.

Nursery have a designated area in the hall to eat their meal which is supervised by paediatric first aid trained nursery staff.

Reception class also eat their lunch in the hall where a paediatric first aider (lunchtime supervisor) is always present. Hot meals are cooked on site (sandwiches are available as an alternative) and are offered free of charge or a lunchbox may be provided by parents/ carers.

Before children join the setting, parents/carers complete a consent form that informs us of any food allergies, intolerances, special dietary requirements, preferences and any special health requirements. If a child has an food allergy, a care plan is put in place. The catering company are informed of any dietary needs/allergies and food is served separately (children with allergies wear white wristbands in the lunch hall). All school staff as of September 2026 have received anaphylaxis training through Allergy Wise.

Illness and safety

We ask that all consent forms are completed prior to the child being admitted to Nursery or Reception class to inform us of any medical needs/allergies. Within this information we require emergency contact details (3 contact details) and we ask that this information is updated as and when names, workplace details or contact telephone numbers change. A care plan may be created for particular medical needs.

We take every precaution to keep children safe and regularly carry out and evaluate risk assessments. If a child does have an accident at school, parents/carers will be informed via our 'Medical Tracker' notification.

If a child is unwell, parents/carers are asked to inform the school office of absence by 9am. In the case of sickness and/or diarrhoea children must stay off from Nursery/School for forty-eight hours from the last event.

If a child needs medication administered, a parent/carer will need to complete the medication form-please see Administration and Safe Storage of Medication Policy.

Independence

We believe that it is important to foster children's independence, and aim to support them in managing their learning, as well as their own needs. We encourage children to be confident to take risks, supported where necessary, and to see mistakes or problems as learning opportunities, whilst being aware of health and safety. We acknowledge that we all have a responsibility to maintain a safe, secure and happy environment. Throughout time in the foundation stage we will encourage children to be independent in a range of areas including toileting, undressing/dressing and using a knife and fork. There may be times where children need support with intimate care (nappy changing, toileting accidents). We have an intimate

care policy and log, parents/carers return the consent form for intimate care (Please see intimate care policy). Guidelines for staff are displayed in the children's toilet areas and a log for each incident is recorded in the record book.

Pacifiers / Dummies

We are aware that some young children use pacifiers and dummies as a comfort or to self soothe but also recognise the impact these, especially dummies, can have on their speech and language development. We will therefore encourage children to keep their dummy or pacifier in their bag during their time in Nursery/school, once they are calm and settled within the provision. Should they become unsettled and seek comfort from their pacifier or dummy, an adult will support them in regulating with alternative strategies. Should a child have a specific sensory need relating to an SEN need this should be communicated and discussed with the SENCO to ensure it is part of a child's individual provision.

Nursery and Reception Joint Activities

Each term Nursery and Reception have a 'Together Morning'. These usually involve activities related to a festival (Christmas, Easter, Chinese New Year) or the current theme / topic. Children use the whole Foundation unit (Nursery and Reception class) to complete a range of activities.
Other joint activities include: Christmas productions, Sports days, sharing performances such as Easter services and a joint trip each year.

Trips and Visits

Nursery and Reception both take part in four trips over the year (one of these is a joint Nursery/Reception trip). Parent/carers will receive information about the trip via Parent Pay. Parents/carer complete consent information via Parent Pay. If parents/carers do not wish their child to attend the Nursery trip, there is no option to stay behind in Nursery as the Nursery will be closed during the trip time-there is no option to swap to a different session. However, if parents/carers of Nursery children would like to book in for extra sessions to attend a trip/special occasion this can be done via the office. School staff that lead trips have received Visit Leader training.

Assessment

Baseline assessments are completed when your child enters Nursery. Each member of staff will then assess the children in their key worker group and identify their next steps on a regular basis. Each term, assessments are recorded on the Nursery data spreadsheet, results are then analysed by the Early Years lead.
Children that start Nursery at 2 years 9 months will receive their 2 year progress check before they turn 3. The key worker will complete the report and meet parents to discuss.
In Reception the Government Baseline Assessment will be completed within the first six weeks of starting Reception. This is an assessment of a child's Early literacy and maths skills. The purpose of this assessment is to provide a starting point as a progress measure.
The children in Reception class are assessed each term against the expectations in the Early Years Framework and judgements are recorded on the Reception data spreadsheet. At the end of the year a judgement will be made against the Early Years goals to see if a child has achieved a good level of development. In order to achieve a good level of development, children need to be working at the expected level in all Prime areas plus Literacy and Maths.
We use an assessment tool called 'Wellcomm' to assess progress in speech and language throughout the year. Interventions are then put in place to further develop these skills.
All Nursery and Reception parents/carers are offered a parent meeting twice a year to review progress and an end of year report in July.

Equal opportunities, Inclusion and S.E.N.D.

We have a strong ethos of inclusion and aim to ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged. We aim to support children's involvement based on what they can do, and not what they cannot do. Our curriculum respects the individual needs of all the children.

All children with special needs or disabilities are included on the school SEND tier list (See SEND Policy). Pupils who are identified with any specific needs will be included on our provision mapping so that carefully structured interventions can be planned and delivered for individuals or small groups. Children on the SEND list will have an Individual Support Plan with information about strategies and individual targets. Any targets from Health professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists are included in Individual Support Plans. These plans are reviewed regularly with parents/carers and further outside agency support will be requested where necessary. School can make referrals to a range of professionals such as Speech and Language, The Early Years Inclusion Team and The Complex Communication Team.

Behaviour management plans and Positive Handling plans may also be put in place where needed.

Parents may request support (or we may suggest involvement) from our Home School Link.

Parental Involvement/Communication

We recognise parents/carers as the child's first educator; we value parents' and carers' involvement in the education of their children. We use the expertise and enthusiasm of parents/ carers and family members to enhance the work of the setting. We believe very strongly in the important role that parents and carers play in the education and well-being of their children.

In the Foundation Stage parents/carers are kept informed of planning and general information via our class pages on the website, class stories on Class Dojo and through termly welcome letters. Nursery and Reception classes both have noticeboards which contain information relevant to each class. The head teacher writes a newsletter which covers information and events as well as upcoming diary dates.

Each child has their own private portfolio on Class Dojo which is shared with parents/carers; key workers and Reception staff share photographs of remarkable learning moments via this portfolio. Parents/carers are also encouraged to share learning moments from home via class dojo.

Both classes use a message book system in line with the rest of school, enabling a daily two-way flow of communication.

We have parent's evenings in the first and second terms to discuss progress, and optional meetings in the third term to discuss a child's end of year report if required.