

HORNINGSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

EYFS Policy

Together We Learn



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We are a successful, community school with a strong family feel. We nurture and inspire everyone in our community to be the best they can. With strong traditional values and high expectations, we ignite a passion for life-long learning and enable our children to be confident, aspirational and creative learners.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Supporting Policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- SEND Policy

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Introduction

Children at Horningsham develop and nurture positive attitudes, becoming proud of and respectful of themselves, others and their environment. This policy reflects our school motto 'Together we learn'. For the purpose of this policy 'Early Years' refers to children in their first year at school (Reception Year).

Children begin their school journey in Robins Class, where our Early Years children learn alongside Year 1. Together, Robins nurture, challenge and inspire one another through exploration, learning and play. We want to provide the best possible foundation for children to build upon their own curiosity of the world around them and develop a love of learning.

Our Aims

We aim to:

- give children the best possible start to their school life.
- develop a love of learning and life-long learning skills.
- foster a safe and supportive culture, where children are willing to take risks and view mistakes as learning experiences.
- provide a well-resourced environment (both indoor and outdoor), which inspires the children's curiosity and self-initiated learning.
- ensure children demonstrate care and respect for the whole school community as well as their school environment.
- develop independent and motivated learners.
- appreciate individuality while promoting tolerance and celebrating diversity.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Early Foundation Stage follows the principles laid out in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2024).

These principles are that:

- Every child is unique and is constantly learning.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn well in enabling environments in which experiences respond to their individual needs.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

The EYFS Curriculum

Our curriculum is underpinned by the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2024) and the non-statutory curriculum guidance, 'Development Matters' 2023. Using these documents, unique learning experiences are planned to respond to children's individual and unique learning needs.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is made up of seven areas of learning. *In total there are 17 Early Learning Goals.*

Prime Areas of Learning	Specific Areas of Learning
<p>Communication and Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listening, Attention and Understanding ▪ Speaking <p>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-Regulation ▪ Managing Self ▪ Building Relationships <p>Physical Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gross Motor Skills ▪ Fine Motor Skills 	<p>Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comprehension ▪ Word Reading ▪ Writing <p>Mathematics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number ▪ Numerical Patterns <p>Understanding the World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Past and Present ▪ People, Culture and Communities ▪ The Natural World <p>Expressive Arts & Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating with Materials ▪ Being Imaginative and Expressive

We also observe the child's learning styles, known as the **characteristics of effective learning**:

- Playing and exploring
- Through active learning
- By creating and thinking critically

Planning the Curriculum

The planning within EYFS follows the schools' long term National Curriculum based planning, which are based around termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning, which may alter depending on children's individual interests, needs or relevant times of the year.

Challenge Time: We begin each day with 'Challenge Time', where both Early Years and Year 1 children have the opportunity to initiate their own learning. They select a challenge which supports both the prime and specific areas of EYFS. This provides the children the opportunity to embed new learning skills through play and engage in sustained shared thinking, a collaborative process where adults and children explore ideas together.

Phonics: The class takes part in daily phonics lessons with the class teacher or teaching partner. We follow Ruth Miskin's Read Write Inc (RWI) scheme to support the teaching of early reading and writing. This scheme continues as they progress into Year 1. We believe that the rapid acquisition of phonological knowledge is the essential foundation block, upon which the rest of the curriculum is built. We therefore aim for children to make the best possible progress in reading, writing and spelling and aim to keep parents regularly informed about their child's progress. We also offer phonic workshops to parents during the early stages of the school year, as parental support is invaluable to the success of the scheme. We assess their phonics progress on a termly basis and tailor support for children who require it.

Reading: Reading in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a key focus, as it lays the foundation for children's future learning and success. At Horningsham, we foster a love of reading by providing a rich and engaging environment filled with a variety of books that reflect children's interests and experiences. Through daily phonics lessons using the Read Write Inc (RWI) programme, children develop essential skills in decoding sounds, blending words, and building vocabulary. Storytime, shared reading, and opportunities for children to explore books independently all contribute to developing their comprehension, language skills, and enthusiasm for reading. We work closely with parents to support reading at home, recognising that strong home-school partnerships are vital for children's progress and confidence as emerging readers.

Early Writing: Early writing in the EYFS is a crucial step in children's communication and language development. It begins with mark-making, where children experiment with shapes, symbols, and letters as a way of expressing their thoughts and ideas. Through purposeful play, phonics instruction, fine motor activities, and opportunities to write for real-life purposes - such as labels, cards, or lists - children begin to understand that writing carries meaning. A language-rich environment, combined with adult modelling and encouragement, supports children in developing confidence, stamina, and the fundamental skills needed to become independent, enthusiastic writers.

Speaking and Listening: Oracy and language development are fundamental to learning in the EYFS, forming the foundation for literacy, social interaction, and cognitive growth. Through high-quality interactions, rich conversations, storytelling, and role play, children learn to express their ideas, listen actively, ask questions, and build vocabulary. Developing strong speaking and listening skills supports children's ability to communicate confidently and clearly in a range of contexts. At Horningsham, we prioritise oracy by creating a language-rich environment where talk is valued, modelled by adults, and embedded across the curriculum, helping children become articulate, thoughtful communicators.

Mathematical skills: In the EYFS, Mathematical skills are developed through a rich variety of class, group, and individual activities and games that make learning engaging and accessible. We use the White Rose scheme of work to guide our planning, ensuring a structured progression in early number concepts such as counting, subitising, number recognition, and understanding quantity. Children explore shape, space, and measure through hands-on experiences, including sorting, comparing sizes, and using everyday objects to solve simple problems. Our approach encourages children to develop mathematical language and reasoning by asking questions, making predictions, and explaining their thinking. Through both adult-led sessions and child-initiated play, children build a strong foundation in early numeracy, supporting their confidence and enthusiasm for maths as they move through school.

Other Curriculum Areas: Knowledge and understanding of the world, personal, social, and emotional development (PSED), music, art and design are taught on a weekly basis. PE is taught twice weekly; once per week by a visiting PE specialist (PH Active Ed) and once per week by the class teacher. Religious Education is taught weekly, during the teacher's non-contact time. Children are introduced to the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance through daily interactions, circle times, and themed activities.

Enrichment Opportunities: We enrich our curriculum further through class trips and visitors to provide children real world learning experiences. We aim to provide these additional learning opportunities at least three times per year. We believe that learning in different, 'real-world' contexts is an invaluable learning opportunity and one that inspires further motivation to learn. Our pupils also attend Forest School for a 6 week block each year at Hidden Woods.

Learning Through Play: Learning through play is fundamental in the Early Years Foundation Stage because it encourages children to explore, experiment, and make sense of the world around them in a natural and enjoyable way. At Horningsham, we believe that play is not just a break from learning but a vital process through which children develop key skills such as problem-solving, communication, creativity, and social interaction. Play allows children to follow their interests, take risks, and learn at their own pace while building confidence and resilience. Through carefully planned and child-initiated play, supported by adults, children deepen their understanding across all areas of learning, making play an essential and powerful tool for holistic development.

Assessment and Observations

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Ongoing assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observations of play, independent learning and guided sessions. Observations are recorded by the teacher and assessments are used to inform them of each child's progress and to identify their next steps.

We carry out the Government Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) with each child within the first six weeks of them arriving at school. Throughout the year, we record judgements against each child's level of development against the Early Learning Goals. We use the non-statutory guide 'Development Matters' (2023) to support observations and outcomes.

During the children's final term in the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and assessment scales. The children will be judged as 'emerging' or 'expected' in the Early Learning Goals. There is also an opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher should they wish to.

The Reception teacher attends annual moderation sessions with local schools to verify judgements.

Our Learning Spaces

Our learning environment is carefully planned for and well resourced. We have a dedicated budget to replenish EYFS materials throughout the year. We have both an indoor classroom, two outdoor classrooms and also make use of the whole school site. We believe that children should be active learners with the freedom to create, think critically and independently risk assess. Our outdoor area is a wonderful space, where children explore and interact with planned opportunities, as well as our continuous provision such as, tyres, bricks, role play areas and water and sand trays. Continuous provision supports learning observations and next steps

Building Relationships

At Horningsham Primary School we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Links with Pre-school providers: Over the years Horningsham have formed strong links with local nurseries and pre-schools, ensuring that children have a smooth transition between nursery and school. Every year the EYFS teacher attends the nursery to observe the child in a setting comfortable to them, as well as meeting their key worker to ensure that we are fully informed about the development to date.

Induction and entry to school: We welcome new children and families to our school through:

- A welcome meeting in Term 6 to give information about the school, the staff, receive a school induction pack and have the opportunity to ask questions.
- A visit to the child's nursery setting or childminder.
- Two induction visits to school with their new classmates to become familiar with the school environment and adults within the class.

Parents as Partners: We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators. We value the support of parents and aim to keep them fully informed about school life and the progress that their children are making. We do that in a variety of ways:

- A formal meeting for parents in Terms 2 and 4 to discuss the child's development and progress.
- An end of year report on their child's attainment, progress and attendance.
- Arranging a range of 'Together We Learn' opportunities throughout the year to encourage collaboration between child, school and parents e.g. Family Friday, Workshops, Special Assemblies, Sports Day.
- Providing weekly learning overviews on our class eSchools page to provide insight to our learning.
- Providing photos on our class eSchools page to celebrate our pupils' learning.
- Sharing our learning each week through our school newsletter.

Starting School

We work with parents to support their child in beginning school and understand that this can be a time of uncertainty for both parents and the child. We encourage all of our pupils to begin school full-time from the September after they become 4. Our school day is 8.40am – 3.15pm. We do not allow Reception pupils to take part in after-school clubs during Term 1 as they are usually very tired by the end of the school day and getting used to the routine of school.

Moving into Year 1

Transitioning from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Year 1 is a significant step in a child's learning journey, and at Horningsham we aim to make this move as smooth and supportive as possible. While Year 1 introduces a more structured approach to learning, we recognise the importance of building on the strong foundations established in Reception. During the summer term, we begin to gently familiarise children with Year 1 routines, environments, and staff, while continuing to use elements of play-based learning. The Year 1 curriculum is carefully planned to ensure continuity, allowing children to gradually adapt to new expectations while feeling secure, confident, and ready for the next stage of their education.

Inclusion and SEND

We are committed to ensuring that every child, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), is supported through personalised planning and inclusive teaching strategies. Early identification and collaboration with external agencies ensure all children thrive. All staff are trained to meet SEND needs and adaptive teaching and Ordinary Provision for All (OPAL) is integral to our teaching and learning across the school.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Horningsham Primary School ensures that all statutory welfare requirements for the EYFS are met, including staffing ratios, supervision, health and safety protocols, and paediatric first aid coverage. All staff understand and adhere to our Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

All adults working within the EYFS meet the qualification and ratio requirements as outlined in the statutory framework. The Free Fruit and Vegetable Scheme and School Milk Scheme support healthy eating habits for young children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As part of the Government's School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme (SFVS), all children in Reception receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable each school day, such as apples, carrots, bananas, or tomatoes. This encourages healthy snacking and supports the development of positive eating habits from an early age. While eating snacks at playtime, children remain in an adult supervised area where they are required to sit or stand calmly to eat, before running in the play areas. In addition, under the School Milk Scheme, children under the age of five are entitled to free milk each day. This is usually provided mid-morning and contributes to their nutritional needs, offering a valuable source of calcium and energy. Parents of children over five may choose to continue the milk scheme at a subsidised cost.

Monitoring and Reviewing

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioner regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

Further Reading

[Statutory Framework for the EYFS \(2025\)](#)

[Development Matters \(2025\)](#)