

*"Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments" -*

Development Matters 2012:

**Early Education**  
The British Association for Early Childhood Education

The Foundation Stage applies to children from birth up to the end of the Reception year. Children enter our Nursery setting when they reach their third birthday and move to Reception when they are four years old.

At Hallsville Primary School our aim is that every child will reach or exceed their full potential. It is through our active, engaging curriculum and stimulating environments in the Early Years Foundation Stage that pupils will flourish. A positive beginning is crucial to lay secure foundations for a child's future educational development.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

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

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes:

### **A Unique Child**

At Hallsville Primary School we recognise and celebrate that each child can be confident, curious, motivated and resilient in their approach and attitude to their learning. Children are unique and we value that each child will learn at a different rate. It is our responsibility to ensure that we scaffold their learning accordingly, to ensure that they are challenged and highly motivated to learn. Children need to feel valued and rewarded for their efforts and staff at Hallsville Primary School use a high level of positive praise in order to boost their self-esteem.

### **Inclusion**

In the Foundation Stage we fully embrace diversity and treat all children equally regardless of race, gender, religion or ability. Children and their families are valued within our school. We invite parents and carers into the Nursery and Reception setting every day, during the settling in sessions, to develop positive relationships. This is an ideal opportunity to communicate about children's needs on a daily basis. We ensure that all children make progression through regular assessments. Teaching and learning is clearly differentiated to meet the needs of all children.

## Welfare

Children's safety is our priority. We have a very experienced team of professionals, such as our Home Liaison worker Ann Jordan and SENCO Ivie Okwuegbuna. They work together to ensure that safe guarding of children in our care is at the forefront of our practice. Through teaching personal, social and emotional development children will learn about boundaries, rules, hazards and limits. In relation to this, children should be encouraged to take risks and to be able to self-regulate. We follow the whole school 'Behaviour policy' in order for staff to have consistent expectations of behaviour and this in turn enables children to comprehend the boundaries of our setting.

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

At Hallsville Primary we aim to:

- Promote the welfare of all children.
- Ensure that premises and equipment are safe and free from hazards.
- Keep records and carry out thorough risk assessments for inside and outside of the classroom.
- Ensure that learning is personalised where needed and that all children are actively engaged with learning.
- Encourage a \*healthy life-style and ensure all children are involved in as much physical development as possible.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures efficiently in order to meet the needs of the children.

## **Research**

Dr. Abraham Maslow synthesized a large body of research resulting in his master creation, the Hierarchy of Needs. This hierarchy, beautiful in its simplicity, describes the stages of human development through which each of us passes on the way to becoming fully functioning, responsible adults.

It is our role as educators of young children that to recognise and address a child's basic needs in order for them to achieve their full potential.



\*Healthy

life-style: each class is expected to have an inviting snack table, which offers a range of snacks, such as fruit, vegetables, pitta bread or bread sticks. Staff must be mindful of the salt content of some crackers. Water should be readily available at all times.

### **Positive Relationships**

At Hallsville Primary School, we value the impact that positive relationships have upon children's confidence, achievement and motivation to learn. We aim to nurture warm, respectful relationships between children, staff and families within our setting.

### **Parents as Partners**

*“Strengthen the positive impressions children have of their own cultures and faiths, and those of others in their community, by sharing and celebrating a range of practices and special events” - Development Matters 2012:*

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At Hallsville Primary School, we know that the parents and carers are the children's first educators. We understand that cultural diversity unites our school and through working in partnership we can ensure that these 'positive relationships' are fully embraced within our setting by:

- Conducting home visits prior to children being enrolled at our school.
- Having settling in time at the beginning of each session as part of the daily routine. In the Spring, term Reception's settling in time becomes a focus session for writing - parents and carers are still welcome to stay and support their children.
- Hosting regular Stay and Play sessions in Nursery and Reception.
- Having two parent's evenings during the academic year.
- Having focused weeks/days, such as 'Cultural Week', 'Sports Days', 'Mother's Monday' and 'Father's Friday'.
- Having children's Special books readily available.
- Report writing to parents and carers at the end of each academic year.
- Recruiting parent and carer volunteers.

### **Enabling Environments**

The environment that children interact with is essential to enhance their growth and development. At Hallsville Primary School, we observe, watch and listen to children, in order to find out their interests and their needs. This in turn, informs our day-to-day provision and planning to maximize the characteristics of effective learning echoing the Development Matters (2012) ethos that:

*“The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner”*

The three elements of the characteristics of effective learning, highlighted above are crucial to Early Years. This is why our indoor and outdoor environment is set up to encourage children to be independent learners, discovering new things and applying new learning in their own play.

### **The Learning Environment**

The Nursery classroom is a large open plan space that has been organised into areas of learning in order to ensure that children can access a range of activities. The areas are Communication, Language and Literacy, Mathematics,

Understanding the World, and Expressive, Arts and Design. In addition to these areas, Physical development and Personal, Social and Emotional development are interwoven throughout provision as well as specifically planned for. The Nursery has a book corner, small world area and a generous garden space. Once children have settled in and had whole group teaching time the children are allowed to free flow in and out of the classroom.

### **Teaching and Learning**

There are two Reception Classes. The areas of learning are spread across the two rooms effectively. The outside area is easily accessible from a shared doorway. At beginning of the year, children begin their day by self-registering and choosing activities with staff, parents and carers. The first lesson of the day is the phonics scheme: Read, Write Inc. (RWI). Maths and Literacy are also taught daily.

In addition to group work, children are allowed to free flow between the two classes and outside. This is an ideal opportunity for them to take part in child initiated learning. The provision enables children to access PSED, Understanding the World, ICT, Physical Development and Expressive Arts and Design through self-chosen activities.

PSED is taught explicitly through a scheme of work called 'Jigsaw' - children are taught to explore feelings, aspirations and sharing.

We plan educational visits at least once a term, which link to our key texts. For example: it could be a 'Gruffalo walk' in the local park, a ride on the DLR or Thames Clipper when we are learning about different types of transport.

Physical Development is a prime area and for that reason from Monday to Thursday we have a sports coach working with the Reception children to develop their fitness.

### **Communication and Language**

Speaking and listening is also a prime area and we are committed to ensuring that children become confident and fluent speakers during their time in the EYFS setting.

We have a Speech and Language therapist based one day a week at the school. She is available to teachers and children promoting and implementing strategies for developing children's language development. The Speech and Language therapist delivers weekly training for all EYFS staff, who are trained in sign along and colourful semantics to promote the communication skills of the children. The therapist also works alongside parents and carers offering workshops and advice. The therapist oversees and monitors target groups across the Early Years with the leader. One of the interventions is a program called Box Clever - where children use small world toys to create stories verbally. Children are assessed at the beginning of Box Clever and on exit to see the progression they have made in speaking.

### **What is Maths Mastery?**

In Reception, maths is taught through Maths Mastery. Teachers have been trained to a high standard. The Mathematics Mastery approach is influenced by the Singapore method. It is a program that enables mathematical concepts to be taught and explained in a very practical way. It has a focus on verbal explanations whereby children are encouraged to use concrete manipulatives and explain how they have found answers.

### **Talk for Writing**

In our daily literacy lessons, we have implemented Talk for Writing. We have key texts that are taught over a longer period of time to maximise writing opportunities. Children become fluent in reciting familiar stories and are expected to take part in short burst writing daily. Children are given a hook at the start of a new story so they are fully immersed in the text. Provision should reflect the key text and story maps should be visually available to encourage story retelling.

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

The Foundation staff use observations from group work as well as from playing with children to inform next steps for learning. Next steps are addressed swiftly through a very efficient system. Teaching assistants are timetabled to address them.

The learning objectives are taken directly from the Development Matters document but in conjunction with this staff also use Jigsaw, Maths Mastery and Talk for Writing to ensure teaching and learning is enriched and informed.

Formative and summative assessments are carried out by teachers and teaching assistants. Formative assessments are carried out on a daily basis during group work, learning journeys and short observations. Staff members are required to annotate children's work and note next steps and give immediate feedback.

Summative assessments take place three times during the year: on entry, mid-phase and on exit from each setting. At the end of Reception, each child's level of development is assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals. They will be awarded a Good Level of Development if they achieve an 'Expected' level in Maths, PSED, CLL, Reading and writing and Physical Development. Parents and carers are informed of their child's progress in a written report at the end of the academic year. They are also welcome to access their child's special books, where they can see observations, photographs of their child and pieces of their work.

### **Learning and Development**

There are seven areas of learning reflected within the Foundation Stage setting.

These areas can overlap, which allow children to make meaningful connections which they can apply to self directed and adult focus learning opportunities. It is through providing high quality provision that children will thrive, be self-motivated and fully engaged in learning.

#### **Prime Areas:**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

#### **Specific Areas:**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive, Arts and Design

We provide and plan for all areas of learning. We ensure that there is a combination of planned adult led and child initiated activities. TAs are utilised effectively to carry out intervention programs to ensure that all children are given every opportunity to reach or exceed their full potential. Learning is fun, engaging and meaningful in the Foundation Stage. We strive to ensure that the characteristics of effective learning are embedded by offering high quality resources that are well organised and accessible to all.

The Foundation Stage is the beginning of children's academic journey and it our responsibility to provide the best start for children in our care.

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