

# HUNGERFORD NURSERY SCHOOL

## Teaching and Learning Policy

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<b>Headteacher</b>	Sign: 
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<b>Chair of Governors</b>	Sign: 
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This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress
- A close working partnership between staff and parents, carers and other agencies
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

## **1. Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#), effective from 1 September 2025.

## **2. Structure of the Nursery School**

Hungerford Nursery School provides education for children from 2-4 years old.

The nursery school has 4 classes:

Turtles and Starfish classes for 2-3 year olds (N1)

Jellyfish and Dolphin classes for 3-4 year olds (or 5yr olds in certain circumstances) (N2)

For details on our sessions offer and times and charging structure please see our 'Charging and Remissions Policy'.

### 3. Vision, Ethos and Values

At Hungerford Nursery School, our vision is to inspire every child to become a confident, capable and curious learner. We are committed to providing a nurturing environment where early experiences lay the foundations for a lifetime of learning, well-being and success.

We recognise that learning begins at birth and continues throughout life. We acknowledge that everyone has the ability to be a competent learner, regardless of background, disability or special needs.

Everything that we do at Hungerford Nursery School is underpinned by our values - **BRICKS**

**B – Belonging:** *We make sure everyone is welcome, included and valued.*

**R – Resilience:** *We keep trying, even when it is difficult.*

**I – Inspiration:** *We notice, imagine and dream.*

**C – Curiosity:** *We look closely, wonder why and discover the world around us.*

**K – Kindness:** *We help each other, share and show that we care.*

**S – Sustainability:** *We look after our world.*



**BRICKS** - *Building the foundations for life*

#### 4. Aims and Objectives

Our aim at Hungerford Nursery School is to provide an environment that allows children to fully develop their skills and abilities and in turn develop confident, inquisitive children, who have a lifelong love of learning.

The aim of this policy is to outline our approach to teaching and learning to ensure consistency and clarity in what we do and why.

#### 5. Settling in and Key Person

At Hungerford Nursery School we want children to feel safe and happy within our setting as well as feeling secure and comfortable with staff. No two children are the same and each child and parent will require a slightly different experience. Below are some of the key moments that we facilitate to ensure that your child settles in with us:

- **Visits** - Before parents apply for a place with us, we encourage visits to the nursery school where we can show parents around and introduce some key members of staff.
- **Home Visit** - We will make sure that every child receives a home visit from key members of staff from nursery. This is an opportunity for parents and staff to start building a relationship and to gather important information from parents about their child.
- **Settling In** – When a child has their first visit we expect a parent or carer to stay with them for the duration. During the second visit we encourage parents to leave for an agreed amount of time. Depending on the individual child and how they settle, staff will work with parents and carers to agree what works well moving forward. This may mean that we gradually build up to their full sessions.
- **Key Worker** – Each child is allocated a key worker. There will be an opportunity early in the year for parents to meet with their child's key worker to discuss their child.
- **Leaving your Child** – When you leave your child we ask you to say goodbye and reassure that you will be back. Children may be upset but saying goodbye is an important part of this process. We always call parents if children become too distressed.

## 6. Effective Teaching and Learning

Effective learning, particularly in the early years, involves active engagement through:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

These characteristics of effective learning (CoEL) describe the behaviours and approaches children use to understand the world and master new skills. We prioritise developing these behaviours in everything we do with the children.

Adults teach, enhance, extend and broaden children's learning to meet individual needs. This begins with the adults developing strong relationships with the individual children and assessing levels of wellbeing and involvement and to ensure that they are ready to learn. Each key person has a deep knowledge of their key children and skilfully plans opportunities to widen interests and develop independence.

We have focus children NOT focus activities. Adults go to the child and meets them in play. The child is NOT called to come to the adult or an activity. This is crucial because high-level involvement occurs in child-initiated activity not adult-led tasks.

Everyone has an important role to play in contributing to learning; therefore, the term 'teacher' can equally apply to all early years' staff. Effective teachers support learning by being alongside children; modelling, scaffolding, using effective questioning, validating and extending.

We believe that teachers teach best when they:

- Have a good knowledge and understanding of individual's abilities, learning styles and attainments.
- Use observations and assessments of children's learning to inform future planning.
- Set clear expectations for what we would like children to achieve.
- Develop children's ability to think independently and problem solve.
- Actively promote positive behaviours and create an environment in which learning can take place.
- Promote a positive appreciation of difference.
- Share a sense of enjoyment and excitement with the children.

Qualified teachers lead the pedagogy across the nursery school, working together to ensure high expectations of teams in the delivery of teaching and learning. Fortnightly team meetings allow staff to meet to reflect on current practice, share knowledge of the children and expertise to further inspire and encourage high quality early years education.

Children experience learning in the here and now. It is in that moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest (the teachable moment) that skilful adults make a difference.

## 7. Our Curriculum

We follow the curriculum as outlined in the latest EYFS Statutory Framework through a developmentally appropriate play-based approach which follows and extends children's interests and experiences.

The EYFS Framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that we must teach. All areas and development are important and interconnected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and Language (C&L)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

We also support the children in 4 specific areas which help strengthen and develop the 3 prime areas, and ignite the children's curiosity and enthusiasm:

- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding the World (UW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

Our curriculum is closely linked to our focus books, stories and rhymes, and we use high quality, carefully chosen books as a foundation for learning across all seven areas of the EYFS Framework. We believe that this approach integrates literacy with other subjects, fostering language, communication, emotional development and knowledge of the world through engaging stories, rhymes and repetitive language within a play-based environment.

### Curriculum Goals

To support and guide children's learning and development, we have developed curriculum goals. These goals focus on practical skills linked to the seven areas of the EYFS Framework. We have 3 goals for our 2-3 year olds based on PSED, C&L and PD and 7 goals for our 3-4 year olds based on all areas of the EYFS Framework. There are 'Stepping Stones' for each goal which breaks down each goal into smaller, achievable steps. Our Curriculum Goals and Stepping Stones can be found in Appendix 3.

### British Values

The five fundamental British Values of **Democracy, The Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs** are promoted throughout the curriculum at Hungerford Nursery School in a variety of ways:

- **PSED** – These values are deeply embedded in PSED, focusing on developing self-confidence, independence, understanding their feelings and showing empathy and kindness towards others.
- **Everyday Teaching** – Promoting values through daily routines, activities and discussions.
- **Establishing Rules and Setting Expectations** – Helping children to understand boundaries and why we have them.
- **Promoting Inclusivity** – Encouraging children to celebrate differences, join in with new interests and understand diverse cultures through stories, food and artwork.
- **Child Initiated Play** – Offering children opportunities to make choices and problem solve.
- **Role Models and Discussions** – Staff act as positive role models, leading discussions and conversations about a wide range of topics to help develop children's understanding.

## 8. Planning and Assessment

Planning and assessment are intrinsic parts of the teaching and learning cycle, with each constantly informing the other. Class teams meet fortnightly for planning and assessment meetings. These meetings are used to discuss the children, where they currently are, current interests and next steps to ensure that planning meets those needs.

When planning for future learning we use our focus books as a guide as well as our phonics and maths progression documents. Our staff are ambitious for all children, planning activities and experience for the children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. To do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also consider the individual needs, interests and development of each child in their care, and consider whether the child needs any additional support. They use information they gather through assessments to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences.

Where a child may have special educational needs and/or needs (SEND), staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant agencies and professionals, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's learning, staff reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and take these into account when making assessments.

### Assessment Process

We use OPAL (Observations of Play and Learning) and Learning Journals (online assessment platform) to assess and communicate childrens' progress and next steps.

The approach is summarised below:

### Starting Points

Starting Point assessments are completed in the first half term of children starting at Hungerford Nursery School. These assessments focus on how the children have settled in and initial observations of the child and their interests. They are shared via 'Learning Journals' and parents are given the opportunity to discuss them with their child's key worker.

### Spotlights

Each child will have two Spotlights per academic year where we share progress and next steps in the child's developmental journey. The time of Spotlights depends on when the child's birthday is; typically, they fall in their birthday month and six months later. When a Spotlight is completed for a child, a judgement of 'met' or 'not yet' is made against each milestone. This is supported by a narrative about the individual child describing their strengths, interests, next steps and what we will do to support their continued progress. Parents are invited to meet with their child's key worker to discuss each spotlight.

Teachers take part in termly Pupil Progress Meetings where progress of individuals is analysed and discussed to ensure continued progress and that needs are identified early and support provided. Data from Pupil Progress Meetings and Spotlights is used to track children's progress termly and reported to Governors.

## 7. Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise and value the influence that parents and carers have on their children's learning and the importance of involving them in what we do in nursery school.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to make sure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents/carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person, with the support of the SENDCo to help families engage with specialist support, if appropriate.

Each class also provides a weekly class update via our online platform 'Learning Journals' detailing what the children have been up to. In this update, staff will share the learning that has happened and suggest things that parents can do at home to support and extend this. We also encourage parents to take a proactive approach to sharing learning and achievements that happen at home and uploading this to Learning Journals.

## 8. Our Learning Environment

At Hungerford Nursery School we offer a stimulating yet calm environment which sets the climate for learning and encourages the development of the Characteristics of Effective Learning. This is through:

- Creative Exploration and expression
- Research, experimentation and exploration
- Large and small group, individual and whole class learning
- Effective questioning
- Well organised areas, with easily accessible resources to encourage independence
- Using both inside and outside environments as well as the local community and beyond.

## 9. Outdoor Learning

We believe that all children have the right to experience and enjoy the essential and special nature of being outdoors. Furthermore, children thrive and their minds and bodies develop best when they have access to stimulating outdoor environments.

The outdoor environment is defined as being the area outside of the classroom and also beyond. All children will be given opportunities to visit places in the community as well as Boxford Woods. These experiences help to broaden children's learning.

## 10. Links with Other Policies and Guidance

- Admissions Policy
- Absence Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safer Recruitment Guidance
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Positive Relationships Policy
- Parent Handbook

## **11. Appendices**

1. OP&L (Observation of Play and Learning) guidance
2. Learning Journals platform guidance
3. Curriculum Goals and Stepping Stones