KINGS HILL SCHOOL

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date of Policy: September 2025

Date of Review: September 2026

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Foundation Stage children join us from two years old in our Nursery Class. At the beginning of the school year in which they are five children join our Reception Class, from our own nursery and other settings. Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Foundation Stage is important in its own right and in preparing children for later schooling. The 2025 Early Years Framework sets out the standards that we must meet to ensure children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

Intent

We place great importance on ensuring children are given a wide range of experiences to develop as a confident, resilient, respectful and motivated individuals prepared to be global citizens of the future. We establish this by providing an enabling environment in which children can learn and develop within an ethos of openness and are taught to treat each other with respect, to feel safe, to have a voice and are listened to. We consider the emotional, physical, social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of each child.

Our children will have a coherent, structured curriculum that leads to the mastery of knowledge and skills learnt in order for children to become successful learners throughout their current and future education. Children will be challenged appropriately and independently to ensure that all children make good progress building on what the already know and can do.

The early year's education we offer our children is based on the following Intent:

- Ensuring that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- Promoting an environment in which children are taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice and are listened to.
- Creating a rich and stimulating environment that allow learners to: actively learn, play, explore, create and think critically.
- A structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content and pedagogy that matches the needs of young children.
- High quality questioning and scaffolding of learning by all adults.
- Development of the learning potential of every child through accurate assessment of their progress and staff's expert knowledge of child development.
- Opportunities to extend children's learning, develop their language and challenge their thinking.
- Opportunities to develop and master personal, social and emotional skills.
- A framework in which parents are encouraged to be fully involved in their child's learning and progress.
- Connection with the wider school community through participation in whole-school events and celebrations, setting the expectations early on for behaviour in the school as a whole

- The knowledge and skills gained are cohesive with the whole school curriculum and prepare children for their next stages in learning.
- Generate a love of learning and enjoyment of school

In order to achieve this, our staff fully understand their responsibility for the quality of their own practice and its impact on children's achievement.

Implementation

Teaching and learning

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do in other key stages.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- The understanding teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how it affects their teaching practice.
- The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- The carefully planned curriculum that is ambitious, and carefully sequenced to build on learning over time. The curriculum provides depth of learning.
- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- The encouragement of children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-regulation;
- The support of learning with carefully organised enabling environments for high quality play and interactions.
- The relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- Regular monitoring and evaluation.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is ambitious. It is knowledge based with regular opportunity for retention whilst also securing the necessary skills to become successful independent and expert learners. It builds on the school's strengths including well developed SMSC provision, embedded school and British values, outdoor learning and enrichment. Children are developed as valued individuals with an emphasis on health and wellbeing both physically and mentally. The curriculum ensures that it is relevant and contextual both locally and globally to develop a deep understanding of the changing world and community that we live in.

The curriculum goes beyond what is needed to reach the ELGs and is designed to ensure that the children have the necessary foundations for the transition to Year 1 and the rest of their education. This ensures the ELGs are not the sole framework for teaching.

- **Communication and Language:** is a fundamental core skill. It is the key to enabling children to achieve and provides the strong foundations for future learning. To support language and communication development children are given lots of opportunities to have conversations with staff and to hear language modelled with new ambitious vocabulary introduced. Children's learning is enhanced by engaging them in discussions about things that fascinate, challenge and excite them. This is embedded through conversation, modelled thinking, story-telling and role play, enabling children to share their ideas with support and modelling by staff. Sensitive questioning ensures children become comfortable in using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures

  EAL: Children learn English from a strong foundation in their home language. Families are encouraged to use their home language for linguistic as well as cultural reasons. Staff appropriately support children in their language development ensuring they are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1.
- **Personal, social and emotional development**: The environment provides children with strong, nurturing and supportive relationships with adults, allowing children to explore and take risks, promoting an inclusive ethos and providing opportunities for each child to become a valued member of the community so that a strong self-image and self-esteem are promoted; Empowering children to be independent enabling them to make choices and decisions.

- **Physical development**: Children all have a strong desire to be physically active which builds the foundations for other areas of their development. A wide range of opportunities are available for all children to develop and practise their fine and gross motor skills promoting independence by helping them to make decisions and choices that will keep them healthy and safe.

- **Literacy**: Children need to develop positive attitudes in relation to reading and writing and will be provided with opportunities and experiences which allow them to develop a life-long love for literacy and reading. Strong systematic phonics teaching is the main vehicle for developing enthusiastic emerging readers and writers, opportunities are given for all children to explore, enjoy, learn about and use words and text in a broad range of contexts and to experience a rich variety of books.

  Early reading is supported by a range of reading books that are carefully matched to the children's phonic knowledge so they can decode independently and develop fluency and comprehension skills.

- **Mathematics**: The aim is to equip all children with a deep, secure and adaptable understanding of **mathematical** concepts. By providing frequent, varied and rich opportunities to build and apply their understanding – such as using manipulatives, practical experiences and everyday application. Children develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery in mathematics is built.

- **Understanding the World**: When exploring the world around them, children will develop an understanding of communities, how the world they live in works and develop technological skills. Whilst exploring these areas, learners will be subjected to key vocabulary to help build up their breath of experiences and knowledge.

- **Expressive Arts and Design**: The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. Children will be provided with

various ways to express themselves and encouraged to perform in a way that positively celebrates themselves.

To support children's development of the above skills, we nurture, encourage and develop children's ability to:

- **Play and explore;** by providing open-ended hands-on experiences to encourage children's innate curiosity and to provide them with opportunities to bring together their current understanding, combining, refining and exploring their ideas in imaginative ways. This way of learning instils in children a 'have a go' attitude, where they are willing to seek challenges and take risks.
- **Actively learn;** by providing extended, uninterrupted lengths of child initiated time to allow children the opportunity to become deeply involved and resilient in the face of challenges of their own choosing. To build on the intrinsic motivation that comes from meeting one's own goals, children are given the opportunity to plan and review these challenges and their processes.
- **Create and think critically;** by sustained shared thinking, modelling and asking open-ended questions to encourage children to generate new ideas, link concepts, and find meaning in cause and effect, when solving problems and challenges. Through planning and reviewing their own goals and challenges, children are given the opportunity to become more conscious of the decisions they make and how they approach tasks, as well as allowing them to become stronger directors of their own learning and confident to monitor what they are doing and explore different strategies to achieve their goal.

Our approach is responsive to all children's needs and is planned to develop children's decision-making and problem solving process. We place great importance on developing children's communication and social skills, and central to this is the role of the adult.

Learning is as practical, hands-on and as open-ended as possible, and all children are given first hand experiences, through educational visits and visitors from the local community, to ensure a deep understanding of what they are learning.

Enabling Environments

Children are unique and holistic learners, thriving within environments that support their individual and diverse motivations, interests and needs. They require a wealth of possibilities within varied contexts, we provide stimulating and challenging environments that values exploration and play.

Our environments both indoors and outdoors offer engaging activities with real choice, autonomy and time. Children can engage in independent exploration and enquiry, connecting with other children within a framework of supportive adult guidance. The environment is organised to encourage independence and is inclusive and accessible.

The resources within the environment are carefully thought about to ensure they support the children's learning and development and are appropriate to the children's next steps. The environment is flexible, and evolves throughout the year to support children as they develop.

Induction

We recognise that starting nursery/school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both parents and children. We have an established a strong set of procedures for transitions to be as smooth as possible.

Our full approach to induction is detailed in our EYFS Induction Policy.

Parents as Partners

When parents and staff work together, the results have a positive impact on the child's development and learning, and we therefore seek to develop a strong and respectful partnership with parents/carers. Key factors in this partnership are:

- Showing respect and understanding for the role of the parent in their child's education. Listening to parents' views of their child's development and any concerns they have.
- Having flexible settling in arrangements to give time for children to become secure and for parents to discuss their child's circumstances, interests, skills and needs.
- Make all parents feel welcome and valued.
- Keeping parents fully informed about the curriculum and their child's progress and achievements.
- Enabling relevant learning and play activities to be continued at home, and similarly that experiences at home are used to develop learning in school.

Impact

We recognise that all children join us at varied starting points and our curriculum is designed to support this diversity. We have high expectations to ensure that all children make 'strong progress' across all of the areas of the EYFS curriculum. We strive for children to reach the national standard of a good level of development at the end of Reception at least in line with national expectations. We have exceeded this in the past few years. Children also make good progress toward their age-related expectations both academically and socially, developing a sense of themselves before transitioning into Year One.

Measuring and monitoring the impact of our curriculum within EYFS takes on many strands; Baseline assessments including the statutory Reception Baseline assessment (RBA) are made at the beginning of Nursery & Reception to inform individual starting points and as a tool to monitor future progress.

Ongoing formative assessment is an integral part of EYFS, staff observe pupils and these observations are used to plan children's next steps. Termly staff meet as a team to discuss individual progress of all children to inform future planning, identify any specific interventions, staff also discuss and agree summative data to ensure that children's progress is monitored carefully, the impact of any interventions is also evaluated and next steps are identified.

Staff attend external moderation meetings with local collaboration schools and CPD to ensure that we feel confident with our judgements and that these judgements are consistent with a range of other settings.

The impact of our curriculum will also be measured by how effectively it helps our children to develop into well rounded individuals who embody our values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and future global citizens. We endeavour for pupils to be Key Stage 1 ready and have our school values embedded by the time they leave reception, preparing them for their future.