



# **Foundation Stage Policy**

## **for Hertsmere Jewish Primary School**

**Reviewed by: J Myeroff**

**Reviewed on: October 2020**

**Date of Next Review: October 2021**

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full on an annual basis.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed on October 2020. It is due for review on October 2021 (up to 12 months from the above date).

Signature *R. Klak-Levi* Headteacher Date October 2020

Signature *J. Grunberg* Chair of Governors Date October 2020

## Foundation Stage Policy

Persons responsible: Jude Myeroff, in consultation with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and all the Early Years practitioners.

**“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its’ own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”** Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

### At Hertsmere Jewish Primary School we aim to:

- Provide a safe and welcoming environment for children and their families. Ensure the safeguarding of all stakeholders within the Foundation Stage. Ensure that all children feel included, secure, valued and happy.
- Establish positive relationships with parents.
- Keep parents well informed about the curriculum and their child’s progress. Build on what children already know and can do and to celebrate achievement. Encourage independence.
- Value children’s interests, providing a balance of adult led teaching and child initiated activities.
- Help children value others, build relationships and learn to co-operate and share with each other.
- Provide a solid foundation in the seven areas of learning through well planned, rich and stimulating experiences.
- Make careful observations in order to support and extend children’s learning appropriately and effectively.
- Ensure that children with special educational needs are identified and receive appropriate support.
- Provide an environment where orthodox Jewish values and ethos are at the forefront of our thinking.

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

In HJPS there is one nursery class providing state provision from 12.30pm-3.30pm and one nursery class providing private provision from 8.30am-12.30pm. There are two Reception classes with children starting school at 8.20 am and finishing at 3.30 pm. All children are admitted to our Nursery and Reception classes at the start of the school year (see Admission Arrangements in Appendix).

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environment

- Learning and Development

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

## **A Unique Child**

“Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.” Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017

We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Early Years education is concerned with developing the full potential of the individual child, through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum. We believe it should offer realistic, but challenging learning expectations which meet the diverse needs of children. Children will be supported in overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment. Our strategies for achieving this include:

- valuing every child;
- treating each child as an individual to ensure equality of opportunity for all;
- providing an environment which is free from stereotypical images;
- using resources that positively reflect diversity;
- planning and delivering a curriculum which helps children appreciate and value differences between children as well as their similarities, recognising that religious and cultural practices may result in children experiencing different, but equally valued experiences;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies, based on children’s learning needs;
- using appropriate language;
- challenging racist and discriminating remarks;
- planning challenging opportunities for more able children;
- facilitating equal access to activities by all children;
- supporting children with special educational needs as appropriate, e.g.
  - providing additional support from adults
  - adapting activities or environments
  - using specialist aids and equipment
  - using multi-sensory materials and experience;
- supporting children with English as an additional language as appropriate.

## **Positive Relationships**

“Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.” Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012.

At HJPS we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. All practitioners involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education.

We aim:

- To provide a two-way flow of information, knowledge, and expertise;
- To appreciate the past and future role parents have in their child's education;
- To ensure that parents are always welcome to discuss their child's development, circumstances, skills and needs with the class teacher/key worker;
- To work in partnership with parents and ensure that there is close liaison between parents and staff.

Strategies include:

- The opportunity for parents to see the school and meet the Head Teacher and Foundation Stage staff prior to seeking admission;
- School website;
- Inviting parents to attend an information session where the practitioners explain routines and philosophy prior to their child starting in the Nursery and again once the pupils have transferred into the Reception class;
- Inviting parents to attend a preliminary session, during school hours, with their child prior to the start date in Nursery;
- Pre-school setting visits for children with SEN
- Inviting parents into school prior to their children starting to meet with their child's Teacher to share their thoughts about and knowledge of their child (Reception); Home-school reading record book for sharing information (Reception);
- Parents' Notice Board – planning sheets on display and suggestion for how parents can become involved in their child's learning e.g. 'this week we are learning about the Post Office. Why don't you write a letter with your child and post it together' (Nursery);
- Photographic display to show parents what their children have been doing (Nursery);
- Weekly class blog on the website with photos
- Parents have daily access to practitioners, which enables good dialogue. They are encouraged to share any concerns early;
- Sharing the children's 'Learning Journals' with parents and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents;
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each year in the Foundation stage;
- Developing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents, e.g. *SEED events*;
- Parents accompany their child into the classroom at the start of the day (Nursery); Open days;

- Home/school link / task books (Reception and Nursery);
- Outings;
- Drop in sessions for Reception, continuous for Nursery;
- Meeting with parents to discuss progress/attainment;
- Parent Staff Association; PTA Coffee Evenings;
- Using parents' skills to develop topic work.

## **Enabling Environments**

“Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.” Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017

At HJPS we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences.

We believe that a quality environment is an enabled environment. We offer stimulating resources which are relevant to the children's culture and communities and rich learning experiences through purposeful play and a range of teaching methods. We support our children in their exploration of the environment including the opportunity to take risks while being taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

## **Learning and Development**

“There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.” Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

The three prime areas of learning are:

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

The four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied, are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

We consider the individual needs and interests of all children to plan challenging, enjoyable and stage-appropriate experiences in all areas of learning. We deliver learning for the seven areas through purposeful play and a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. This balance gradually shifts towards more activities led by adults as children progress through the Foundation Stage in order to help children prepare for the more formal learning they will experience in Year 1. We believe that play is essential for children's development in that it builds their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others.

When planning and guiding children's activities we look at the different ways in which children learn and reflect these in our practice. The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 details the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning as:

- **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; and
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

## **Jewish Studies**

In Nursery, Jewish Studies is fully integrated in the curriculum. In Reception there is a dedicated Jewish Studies session Monday to Thursday and elements of Jewish Studies are also integrated into the secular curriculum every day through the continuous provision. Planning for Jewish Studies is done using the principles of the secular Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.

## **Assessment**

"Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support." The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage is in accordance with the whole school policy for assessment. It involves both Formative and Summative assessment and includes:

- Baseline assessments when the children first come in
- careful observations carried out while children are engaged in normal classroom activities, in order to gain an insight into children's interests and what they can do;
- careful observations carried out during focused group work/whole class teaching in order to assess children's level of understanding related to specific skills and concepts;
- discussions with children about their interests and their learning;
- use of Early Years outcomes
- the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (end of Reception) – see Appendix.

The Foundation Stage Practitioners use these ongoing assessments in order to plan and shape learning experiences for each child individually as well as groups of

children and the class as a whole. At HJPS we believe that all observations, assessments and recording are an integral part of teaching, as they inform future planning for the children's needs.

## **Safeguarding and Welfare**

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them." Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

At HJPS we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Foundation Stage is included in the whole school policies appertaining to Safeguarding and Welfare. It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and help them understand why they exist.

At HJPS we:

- promote the welfare of children;
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so;
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

## **Inclusion & Equal Opportunities**

Early Years education is concerned with developing the full potential of the individual child, through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum. We believe it should offer realistic, but challenging learning expectations which meet the diverse needs of children. Children will be supported in overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment:

## **Admission arrangements**

### **Nursery**

- Children are admitted into the Nursery in the September of the academic year when they are rising 4.
- Children are invited to visit the Nursery with their parents or carers during the summer term preceding their entry into the school.
- There is a staggered admission period to allow for children to be supported in settling into a new environment. This admission is normally in age order, although any children already identified as having special educational needs may be admitted early on in the admissions period. This will allow for individual support for such children.

### **Reception**

- Children are admitted into Reception in the September of the academic year when they are rising 5.
- During the summer term preceding their entry into Reception, children visit the Reception classes when they meet the Reception practitioners and see their new classrooms.
- For one week at the start of the Autumn Term, children attend half-day sessions, depending on if they attended HJPS nursery or are new to the school. This enables them to start in a smaller group, where possible with familiar children, whilst they get used to their new environment.

### **Areas of Learning**

Information from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

- **Communication and language development** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- **Literacy development** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

## The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

Information taken from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

In the final term of the year in which children reach age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile must reflect: ongoing observation; all relevant records held by the setting; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals in each of the seven areas of learning. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile.

Year 1 teachers must be given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning as detailed previously in 'Learning and

Development'. These Profiles inform a dialogue between each child's Reception and Year 1 teacher about each child's stage of development and learning needs and therefore assist with the planning of activities in Year 1.

The results of the Profile are shared with parents and/or carers who are given the opportunity, if they wish, to discuss the Profile with the teacher who completed.

The Profile must be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities. Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with special educational needs and disabilities must be made as appropriate. Specialist assistance may be sought to help with this. Children will have differing levels of skills and abilities across the Profile and it is important that there is a full assessment of all areas of their development, to inform plans for future activities and to identify any additional support needs.