



Exploring together
Succeeding together

EYFS Policy

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‘The wider the range of possibilities we offer children, the more intense will be their motivations and the richer their experiences.’ – Loris Malaguzzi

Our School Core Values

At Hill Avenue Academy our aim is to educate all children to the highest levels of academic and personal achievement developing confident, happy and compassionate members of society through our bespoke curriculum which is built upon, Exploring together; Succeeding together, in conjunction with our school values.



Every child is valued as an individual; we aim to nurture well-rounded, respectful, ambitious, and confident children who will develop skills for life-long learning. Our curriculum, with the children in our care at the heart of every decision, allows this to happen daily. We nurture our children on their journey and encourage them to be creative, unique, open-minded, and independent individuals, respectful of themselves and of others in our school, our local community, and the wider world.

Intent

The children in our care are at the heart of every decision ensuring they receive opportunities that will give them a happy, positive, and enjoyable start to their school life within a safe and secure environment. We aim to embrace young children’s learning through curiosity and play, as we believe that, there are no limits on what they can achieve in their lives when they build upon a strong foundation of inspired teaching and a strong home-school partnership.

Young children learn predominately through play and, therefore, structured, planned, personalised, and child-initiated play is at the heart of how we deliver our Early Years curriculum at Hill Avenue Academy. We are passionate about providing hands-on practical learning opportunities for children that embed a love for learning. We ensure that the continuous provision and the learning environment is engaging, challenging and provides children with opportunities to be independent and collaborative learners. Provision is personalised – offering support and challenges based on individual needs. Children are valued as unique individuals and diversity is respected.

Our intent is to secure solid foundations and to challenge individual talents by offering quality first teaching, and delivery of the EYFS curriculum and by embedding the Characteristics of Effective

Learning, a learning environment where our children have the very best learning experiences, opportunities and interactions that;

- Inspire them to learn the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to have highly successful, fulfilled childhoods and future adult lives.
- Help them to become children who build trusting friendships; are strong in spirit (and are resilient); make wise personal choices; and have strength of character.
- Provide the opportunity to be part of a thriving community that enriches childhood, celebrates success, and encourages children to believe in their own potential.

Our curriculum is progressive and planned by keeping in mind the needs of all children. We plan lessons to make children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. This enables our practitioners to build knowledge about how children; learn and make progress. We recognise that to meet the Early Learning Goals and achieve a good level of development some aspects of knowledge need to be automated and fluent to support and enable later learning, such as Phonics and Number.

Staff are committed to the development of sustained shared thinking by offering encouragement, clarifying ideas, and asking open ended questions which support and extend children's thinking and help them make connections in their learning. Staff are trained to support children to achieve their very best outcomes. Teachers will use their expert knowledge of the children to assess what the children know, monitor, and make judgements on their progress, use this information to plan next steps, taking into account the child's interests and disposition to learning.

Implementation

Our Early Years curriculum has been designed, tailored, and enhanced specifically for the children at Hill Avenue Academy, based on our children's starting points, educational theories and research. There is a strong focus on the child as a whole person and how they communicate and build relationships with those around them to support their success. We ensure that children are exposed to future learning opportunities across our school to encourage them to be resilient, ask questions and build excitement in anticipation for the future learning that awaits them.

Our documentation is bespoke to the children at Hill Avenue Academy, this includes: EYFS Progression Document – a demonstration of how skills and knowledge are developed in our setting and is used to support all children, no matter what their starting point. EYFS Continuum-to plan and adapt their approach to best support each child, maximise learning and opportunities and promote learning across a range of activities. Long-Term Overview – an overview of learning across the academic year. Medium-Term Planning – A summary of each topic across the academic year, skills accessed and specific focus areas, based on the progression of individuals and the continuum. Short – Term Planning – A breakdown of the learning that will take place in the week.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is mandatory for all schools and early years providers in Ofsted registered settings attended by young children i.e. from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday. There are four themes in the EYFS which express important principles underpinning effective practice in the care, development and learning of young children. The four themes are; A Unique Child; Positive Relationships; Enabling Environments; Learning and

Development. Each of the underlying principles are interwoven through our bespoke curriculum. These are underpinned by the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

A UNIQUE CHILD – POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS – ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS – LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PLAYING AND EXPLORING – ACTIVE LEARNING – CREATING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework, we include all seven areas of learning in our curriculum at Hill Avenue. The seven areas are:

- Personal, social and emotional development.
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and design

These areas are often interwoven through cross-curricular opportunities with a key focus on providing children with life skills for the future.

The Developmental Stages within the EYFS establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage and help them to build secure foundations for future learning. By the end of the Foundation Stage some children will have met the goals, other children will be working towards some or all of the goals. Those who have met the goals will work on embedding the skills learnt to allow a deeper understanding to enable them with their transition into KS1.

Learning Environments and Outdoor learning

The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a collaborative and safe environment. Equipment and resources are accessible and can be located and used independently by children. The enclosed outdoor space is secure and offers children the ability to explore a different environment, presenting them with different challenges and experiences. Activities are planned throughout the learning environment to help the children develop in all areas of learning.

Assessment

Assessment and record keeping is consistent with the whole-school policy on assessment.

Baseline

Prior to children starting, staff spend time speaking to the child's parents, previous settings and gaining any further understanding of the child as an individual and their next steps. During the first 6 weeks in both Nursery and Reception, all staff use ongoing assessments, observations and

conversations with the child to develop a baseline assessment. This goes alongside the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment provided by the Government for children in Reception.

Speech and Language

During the first term, after carrying out WELCOMM assessments, children who are identified as those who would benefit from support in speech and language skills are targeted for small-group interventions. These include communication games, social stories, modelled language. Children who need a further referral to Speech and Language services are discussed with the SENDCo and next steps are put in place.

Ongoing Observations

All ongoing observations are used to both identify children's next steps and also share their progress with parents. These assessments are specifically for significant moments with the individual child. We define significant moments as those where children are demonstrating a skill they may not have previously done confidently or when they model a 'light-bulb' moment. These moments are uploaded to Evidence Me with a summary of what the child has achieved.

Phonics assessments are carried out using our phonics tracker every half term to identify the progress made by pupils. We then plan to support pupils that are not making expected progress by carrying out interventions to facilitate their progress.

In Summer Term of Reception, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. This provides parents and carers, practitioners, and leaders 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 is moderated internally and in partnership with other schools within our Multi-Academy Trust, to ensure consistent assessment judgements.

Parents and the Wider Community

At Hill Avenue, we believe the starting point for developing life-long positive relationships with the home is a belief in the philosophy of partnership, where parents and staff have equal importance to impacting on a child's education. Parents/carers are invited in at least once every term for one of the following:

Stay and Play – an opportunity to engage in topic-based activities with their child in the classroom setting to see what sparks their interest. In addition to this, our floor book is available for them to view alongside their child's books. The class teacher is readily available for any questions the family may have.

Workshops – Bespoke workshops, based on parent/carer interests are held in classrooms to support families with their child's learning and development at home. Effective practice is modelled, and families have the opportunity to trial implementing what they have found out in a classroom environment, before receiving a wide range of resources to use with their child at home.

Performances – *A moment for the children to shine! The Reception children will perform the Christmas Nativity for all the pupils and Parents/carers. The Nursery children also sing Christmas songs for their Parents/Carers.*

Supporting transition to Reception

The Early Years Leader will work closely with the Nursery class teacher and external professionals to ensure our youngest children feel prepared for transition. This may include classroom exchanges (where the Reception teacher spends a day teaching in Nursery), visits to local nurseries to meet children in the new intake and phone calls with any professionals included in the child's journey so far. During Summer 2, a welcome workshop is held for all parents, where they are introduced to staff, the curriculum and a 'day in the life' where they will receive a parent pack to provide their child with the best possible start to the new academy year.

Supporting transition to Year 1

The Early Years Team at Hill Avenue Academy work with leaders, Key Stage One staff and Trust leaders to ensure that a smooth transition to Year 1 is provided for all learners. This begins during Summer 2, where the children will begin to get to know their class teacher by 'drop ins' or invitations to play in their setting. The class teacher will work closely with their Year 1 teacher to consider the Autumn Term timetable and what the curriculum will look like to ensure that every child can access it with confidence and appropriate challenge.

During the Summer Term, the children will be introduced to some of the expectations for Key Stage One, such as extended periods of discrete learning, homework tasks and introductory workshops with their parents to allow them a chance to ask any questions.

Impact

The impact of our pedagogy and our curriculum is measured by how effectively it helps our children develop into well rounded individuals who embody our school values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens.

Children will develop a wider sense of the world around them and can draw on these experiences during interactions with others and link this to new learning. They will also be able to apply their knowledge to a range of situations making links, by explaining their ideas and understanding. Children are confident to take risks and discuss their successes and failures with adults drawing on their experiences to improve or adjust what they are doing.

Our children make progress academically, emotionally, creatively, socially, and physically. They leave Early Years as well-rounded individuals who can express their opinions and build positive relationships with both adults and peers in a safe environment. These tools ensure they are fully equipped to begin learning The National Curriculum Programme of study in Year 1.

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Marking and Feedback Policy

Curriculum Policy

Assessment Policy

SEND Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by staff and Trust Directors/CEO.

