

EYFS Policy

Our Early Years Foundation Stage - Nursery and Reception



Introduction - Our Intent

Development Matters states that: *"If we are successful in giving every child the best start in their EYs, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow."*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to the learning and development of all children from birth to the end of the Reception Year, which in Hatton Hill Primary School includes the Nursery and Reception Classes. At Hatton Hill, we are blessed with a fabulous EYFS environment both inside and out. Each child's day is filled with creative, imaginative and focussed playful experiences.

At Hatton Hill Primary School we believe that every child deserves the very best start to life. We aim to provide a curriculum, which ignites a passion for learning and helps to give our children the strong foundations needed to ensure good progress, both through school and as lifelong learners. Early

childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in itself.

The early years foundation stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old. It is a particularly important stage as it is usually a child's first experience of school. Children must be happy, secure and stimulated to ensure they develop a love for learning right from the start. In the EYFS we embrace our whole School motto 'Achievement through happy learning'. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners who achieve and make progress. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential.

Every child deserves to have an equal chance of success. At Hatton Hill we seek to tailor our provision to meet all children's needs. We work to ensure that children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. We work alongside a variety of agencies to make sure that children promptly receive any extra help they need, so they can progress well in their learning.

"All children learn more in the period from birth to five years old than any other time in their lives. If children are at risk of falling behind the majority, the best time to help them to catch up and keep up is in the early years. Every child can make progress, if they are given the right support. When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow." Development Matters Guidance 2020

We seek to provide high quality care by putting our children at the centre of the learning experience. Adults build caring relationships with every child, helping to scaffold their learning and prepare them to take their next steps.

Our curriculum is carefully developed and sequenced to help children to build their learning over time. It includes a wide variety of topics which appeal to our children and ensure a broad and balanced curriculum. However, we know that young children's learning is often driven by their interests and planning is structured to take this into account. A key driver for our curriculum is highly structured language teaching which aims to develop a sound understanding of language concepts as well as a broad vocabulary.

We know that children are powerful learners and they benefit from a variety of approaches including learning through play, from watching adults, from watching each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching. Our staff carefully develop indoor and outdoor environments to provide opportunities for high-quality play. Staff will, when needed, join in to sensitively support and extend children's learning.

Staff constantly assess and evaluate what children know and what they can do by observing them. This helps staff to move children on their next step in the learning or identify and address any possible barriers to learning. This ongoing process ensures that children continue to make progress.

We support our children to build the skills and knowledge needed to be able to self-regulate effectively. Language development is key to help children to focus their thinking, monitor what they are doing and adapt. It also supports the ability to regulate strong feelings, to be



patient and to become resilient and bounce back when things get difficult. We use the WellComm and Neli assessments to help pinpoint and address language difficulties. We will also refer children if appropriate, for more specialist support from Speech and Language Therapy Service.

Our staff work alongside our families to build strong, respectful relationships. We value the support our families give their children and seek to provide regular updates on their child's progress in school and give pointers for how they support their learning even further. We provide a wide range of ways for our parents to be involved and further support learning, including the home learning bags which can be loaned in Nursery, weekly Nursery News bulletin, Fridge words, and regular Stay and play sessions. Encouraging parents to 'Chat, play, read' is at the heart of all we do with families to support the development of a real love of books, reading and to develop a richer vocabulary and understanding of language.

We adhere to the 'Statutory Framework of the EYFS' and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments, with teaching and support from adults** in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/ carers;
- **Learning and Development**.

Early years Foundation stage Curriculum

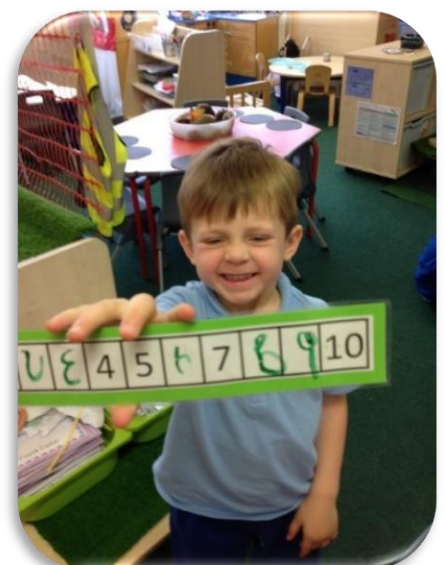
We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the **seven areas of learning** to enable the children to achieve and (sometimes) exceed the **Early Learning Goals**.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Learning for children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. 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, both in the EYFS and into Key Stage 1. These three areas are the **prime** areas:

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

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

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



In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

1. **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
3. **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

The three prime areas of learning are:

Communication and language

. As spoken language underpins all the areas of learning we aim to provide a language rich environment, numerous back and forth interactions, quality conversations and introduce, model and use a wide vocabulary, to support each child's learning. The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Physical development

Your child develops the ability to move in different ways: to use gross motor skills (eg. Run, throw, catch), develop fine motor skills (e.g. Hold a pencil correctly and use scissors), learn about healthy living and manage their self-care independently (e.g. Using the toilet, getting dressed and undressed and washing hands).

Personal, social and emotional development

Each child is supported to develop their confidence and self-awareness: they learn to manage their feelings and behaviour: begin to make positive relationships with adults and each other, so that they can share, take turns and play cooperatively with others: following class rules and being sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

The specific areas of learning are

Literacy



Your child will be taught phonics, using the Read Write inc scheme. During nursery and Reception they will use their phonic knowledge to read and write letter sounds and simple words, progressing to reading and writing sentences. Your child will listen to stories, rhymes and songs on a daily basis and ask and answer comprehension questions informally, through conversations, reading sessions and story time on the carpet. Our aim is to develop a lifelong love of reading in your child.

Mathematics

We aim to develop a positive attitude and interest in maths, with children learning to work confidently with numbers (eg. Counting forwards and backwards, using objects to add and subtract two-digit numbers). In Reception the children will follow the Power Maths scheme, which provides a strong grounding in number, yet also have many daily opportunities to consolidate and extend their learning independently and through teacher led challenges. Your child will also use everyday language to talk about size, capacity, time and money.

Understanding the world

Your child will learn about the community they live in and the people who help us. They make observations of animals and plants and talk about changes and why they occur. They will explore the world at their doorstep, yet investigate our diverse world through exploring other cultures. They are also encouraged to explore and use technology for a range of purposes.

Expressive arts and design

Your child has opportunities to be creative, to sing, dance, paint, draw and make music, to experiment with imaginative play and engage in role play.

During the Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

The importance of Communication and language 'talk' at Hatton Hill

At Hatton Hill we understand that 'talking' is vitally important for our youngest children. Communication and language are interconnected with all other areas of learning. We believe that all children need the right support to ensure they develop to their full potential. For many of the children starting school at Hatton Hill, 'talk' is the right support. It is vital to make time and space to speak with children individually and plan for 'talk'. This is planned time with all children but is particularly valuable for the quieter members of class, or those that struggle to communicate. This 'Talking time' is built into topic planning and all stories and topics are prefaced by discussion about 'what we already know'. In continuous provision, we believe that taking the time to talk and interact with children is a vitally important way of getting to know individual children and is also a powerful means of scaffolding children's learning.



At Hatton Hill we believe children should be equipped with the skills they need for a life of happy, active learning. We therefore believe it is important to teach children how to use language for thinking and for collaborative working, or 'inter-thinking'. We ensure that children have a strong 'inner voice' that can be trusted to think a problem through, to self-regulate, or to show

resilience when facing a challenge. At Hatton Hill, adults model their own thinking, they narrate actions or activities, we talk through deliberately made mistakes and take the time to formally teach vocabulary and conceptual language. We aim to teach children comprehension skills that will become increasingly useful as they progress through the school curriculum. We believe in explicitly teaching children how to answer the how, why, who, when, where questions.

At Hatton Hill during the early years we are committed to closing the word gap. Our aim is to address, intervene and begin to close the word gap which already exists for many of our pupils who come from linguistically deprived backgrounds. We will do this by: 'Making Words Count', by providing an environment in which children are surrounded by spoken and written words and are inspired to learn them. Some children starting school may face barriers to their progression with Communication and Language. We ensure that the correct support is put in place during the early years. Support is varied and is planned to meet the needs of the individual child. Support includes identifying those that would benefit from the additional support of a Speech and Language therapy referral, the NELI programme, support for EAL children and more informal, classroom-based interventions.

Ensuring an 'enabling environment', with teaching and support from adults

The (2020) principle referring to 'enabling environments' has updated wording as follows:

- 'Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time.
- Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers'.

Essentially, this places emphasis on the role of teaching and support from adults as key to an enabling environment. At Hatton Hill we are proud on the settings we have created. We believe an enabling environment is a rich and varied space where risks are minimised and well managed, and children are protected from harm and abuse.

To help ensure our environments are enabling our EYFS team plan and deliver the same consistent practice, as follows:

- We create an environment that is warm, welcoming and nurturing and facilitates a sense of belonging
- We create 'Child friendly spaces' which helps to promote engagement but also help prevent distractions.
- We have 'Neutral calming colours' on our display boards
- A 'Wow wall' is used as a celebration of children's learning and achievements.
- Feelings self-registration enables our children to share and express their feelings/emotions. The EYFS team will calm and comfort children that are feeling anxious, worried etc.



- Meeting and greeting children at the gate/classroom door for a positive start and /or reassurance.
- Each child is given a Key person who forms a positive relationship with the child and knows them really well.
- We encourage self - selection of permanent resources. This allows the children the opportunity to choose their own resources and activities, demonstrating that the child's views are important, whilst allowing them to take ownership of their own play.
- Permanent resources are displayed in baskets with pictures and label. These resources are at a child's level and allow them to explore and create.
- Self- serve at snack times also encourages independence skills.
- Each child has a clearly labelled space for coats, PE bags, lunch bags etc.
- We offer a range of resources, which are familiar to the children as well as activities that are new to them
- Enhancements are additional to permanent resources and are set up to further develop a child's knowledge and understanding (next steps, topics etc.)
- We ensure that the activities and environment offer room for outdoor and indoor play, sufficient space for children to move and collaborate, and encourage exploration and risk-taking
- Consistent indoor and outdoor provision. Our outdoor classroom is set up similar to the indoor classroom but on a larger scale. It still has the child friendly spaces which help to promote engagement and offers help to prevent distractions.
- We have a designated physical area for children to explore, create and take risks e.g. using the large equipment to travel in a variety of ways and develop balance and control.
- We provide a range of activities which serve different purposes: inspire imagination and role play, exploration of personal relationships and feelings, problem solving, quiet time and reflection.
- We have areas of learning within the indoor and outdoor provision. These areas offer activities and resources for the children to explore and achieve all of the above (starting at the child's level).
- We carefully plan the classroom layout to ensure that quiet areas are near each other to allow the child quiet time and reflection. Other areas include :Carpet area, construction, exploration area, reading area, writing (mark making area), maths area, finger gym, role play, craft table, small world, snack area, feelings boards, play dough, sand, water, a construction area, home corner, various toys and books and much more.
- The wheel of 5 is displayed within the areas. The wheel of 5 offers some open ended questions that can be used to assess and challenge children during continuous provision time. These questions are linked to the child's starting points and level of need.
- We ensure all children and parents/carers feel welcomed and valued. Some ideas include fostering close collaboration with parents by including family photos on display boards, singing songs sung in the family home, and providing a comfortable welcoming area with places for a parent to sit with staff and their child
- We start from 'where the child is at' and have familiar themes e.g. a 'This is me' topic and Nursery have a 'my family display'



- Across the EYFS all children have their own Home learning journey. The home learning journey is a book the child can add to at home, sharing adventures with family and activities completed at home. These books are shared in class.
- We plan for 'Stay and play sessions'.
- We have Phonics/maths/Christmas open mornings whereby family members can work alongside their child and get a feel for 'how we do things' and how settled their child is in the environment.
- We have a big focus on PSED at Hatton Hill and encourage children to 'go for green'. Children share their understanding of 'kind hands' 'kind feet' etc. The children are also heavily involved in creating a class charter. Here they can share rules they feel are important within our setting.
- We engage children in activities to build their emotional resilience and social skills
- Carpet times and planned circle times allow the children to share and discuss their feelings and emotions. We discuss how we feel at times and what we can do to stay in our 'balloon of happiness'. This also allows quality 'time to talk' with peers, encouraging and promoting social skills.
- We support children in resolving conflicts. This can be turn taking, sharing resources or sharing ideas. The teacher will model how we can 'fix the problem' through discussion, questioning and modelling "Please may I have a turn?", "Stop! I don't like that".

Planning

Planning in the early years is about meeting young children's needs so that they can play and learn happily in ways which will help them develop skills and knowledge across the Prime and Specific areas of learning in the EYFS. Planning is unique to each school and at Hatton Hill we plan with our own children in mind. We create medium term plans based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. This type of plan needs to be in place so that all the necessary resources such as books and props can be gathered, they may be based around a theme such as 'Autumn' or a book e.g. 'Room on a broom'. However, all planning should be flexible and used as a guide rather than followed slavishly. The most important planning that is done is the short-term daily/weekly planning that arises from discussions with the children and their parents and is based around their current interests. The child who has just got a new baby sister will have much to talk and think about and may want to make something for 'new sister', just as will the child whose house is near a building site and who arrives full of excitement to talk about a huge crane she has seen on her way to school. This is the stuff of short-term planning - the fleeting but compelling interests of this child on this day. We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses. Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children's individual 'Next Steps in Learning' and personalised learning needs are met.

Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning. There are also allocated times for whole class daily 'carpet learning sessions.' These may include such experiences as an introduction to a new topic, a shared story, a demonstration or explanation of a new skill, the Read, Write, Inc phonics input or a 'Power Maths' input.



As explained in our Intent above the curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: 'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'.

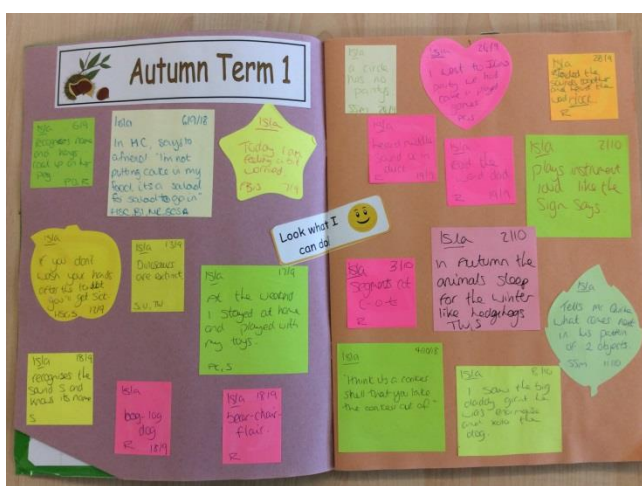
We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults in class interact when appropriate to stretch and challenge them further. We believe that time to talk and good open ended questioning is vital in moving children's thinking and understanding forward.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and outdoors as far as possible.

Observations and Assessment

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. Put simply observation is the practice of looking at and listening to children to find out how they are developing, what they like doing and what they are learning through their play and the experiences on offer. They help teachers to decide whether the child's development is at the expected stage, whether the resources such as toys and equipment are suitable for the child and to focus them on what to provide in future to support the child to develop new interests, learn new skills and acquire new knowledge.

Observations are recorded in a variety of ways, they may be mentally stored or written down and are frequently transferred to the child's assessment tracker as evidence of what the child can do. Some may be recorded on 'post its' and stuck in the child's learning journey under the title of 'Look what I can do' or 'Wow moments'. These may be a nice quote of something the child said in an enlightened moment or something an adult observed that was a huge step forward and deserved to be celebrated. Some may go alongside a photo of the child, they are a celebration of development.



Observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal Learning Journey book. At the end of the year the 'Learning Journey' book provides a celebration of the child's achievements through photos, observations and samples of work. Staff take pride in these books and the development of the child from the start to the end of the year is a pleasure to see, these are monitored by the Deputy Head for consistency and standards.



Some observations will not be recorded in the Learning Journey book but will simply be used to inform the teacher's assessment of the child. These ongoing observations are used to inform the EYFS Profile/Development Matters bands. The children's progress is reviewed continually and records of what each child can or can't do are transferred and recorded termly on the school's assessment system 'Target tracker'. Teachers then meet with the Deputy Head in 'Progress meetings' whereby the progress of individual children is discussed and Teachers are held to account for progress. Throughout the year teachers assess which children are demonstrating 'Typical development' and which are not. Teachers focus on the areas that children 'Can't do' and target that area or sometimes certain children in the form of 'Next Steps'.

Throughout their time in Nursery and Reception, parents/carers are welcomed in to share their children's learning; both informally through our 'open door' policy and more formally during parent/teacher consultations. At the end of the Reception year the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement. Teachers are again held to account in progress meetings and also in their Performance Management Appraisal meetings with the Head teacher. Teachers are moderated on a three-year cycle by Sefton MBC. This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements.

The children are assessed as achieving a 1, 2 or 3 against each area of the EYFS curriculum:

- 3 = Exceeding ELG - exceeding the expected level
- 2 = Expected ELG - meeting the expected level
- 1 = Emerging ELG - not yet meeting the expected level

The EYFS Profile data is also used to support a smooth transition to Key Stage 1 by informing the professional dialogue between EYFS and Key Stage 1 teachers. It informs Parents/Carers about their child's development against the ELGs and the characteristics of their learning. Parents/Carers receive a written report about their child's achievements alongside the celebratory 'Learning Journey' books at the end of the year.

Safety including Safeguarding and Welfare requirements

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Hatton Hill Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Reception we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads are used to photograph children (for photos in the learning Journey books) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs.

Our School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role.

The EYFS staff hold the Paediatric First aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at our School. Backing up this policy is a dedicated safeguarding team which includes two trained Designated Safeguarding Leads. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace to meet their potential. We adhere to the school's SEN and Inclusion policy.



We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies. We have a designated SENDCo in school who supports us with any additional learning or disability needs a child may have and also a designated teacher with responsibility for our pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and we acknowledge their additional needs with early language acquisition. With regard to our high achieving children to ensure that their individual needs are met and their talents fostered. We ensure that these children are challenged appropriately to reach their full potential.

The Role of Parents/Carers

We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding open afternoons/ information evenings before the children start school;
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school and at our home visits carried out each July;
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Summer Terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys;
- Inviting parents into school for our 'Come and Play sessions' and termly for our 'Come and Learn With Us' afternoons;
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Providing curriculum planning overviews for each topic, each term, highlighting how they can support their child at home;
- Inviting parents into school for 'parent phonics' sessions to demonstrate how we teach phonics and help them support their child;
- Providing parents with an end of year summary report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.



Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. Children attend a number of introductory sessions with their parents/carers and also with their nurseries into Reception Class to develop familiarity with the settings and practitioners. Our Reception staff also visit the local nurseries and preschools in return, to familiarise themselves with the children.

Parents/carers are encouraged to take up the offer of a home visit (by the Nursery class teacher and TA) or have the option to instead meet with Reception staff in school. This is a valuable time to talk 1:1 with them and answer any concerns/queries they may have.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. The children's assessment data and writing books are sent with them to Year 1 so that their new teachers are able to plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class. Children spend a number of sessions towards the end of the school year in the Year 1 classroom and/or with the Year 1 teacher in their Reception classroom to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and are 'next year ready'.

Monitoring of the EYFS

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The Head and Deputy Head teachers are responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress. All adults in the Reception team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets. EYFS teachers are held to account for their children's progress and well - being at progress meetings and Appraisal meetings with the Head and Deputy Head teacher.

