



Higher Failsworth Primary School

'Working together for an Education for Life.'

Starting Nursery Handbook

2023-2024

Higher Failsworth Primary School: Early Years Foundation Stage

Our school is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected.

We believe that all children should be able to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and fun environment. We all work for our school to be a happy place where good behaviour is expected and all children enjoy their learning journey.

At Higher Failsworth we work together for an education for life and school life indeed starts in the Foundation Stage.

Our aims in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally;
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document.

“The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.” (DfE Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, March 2017),

They support children’s learning in all other areas, and they are known as the prime areas.

The **Prime Areas** are;

Communication and Language

- Listening, attention and understanding
- Speaking



Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships



Physical Development

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills



The **specific areas** of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are;

Literacy:

- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing



Mathematics:

- Numbers
- Numerical Patterns



Understanding the World:

- Past and Present
- People, Cultures and communities,
- The Natural World



Expressive Arts and Design:

- Creating with Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive



Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The Reception teachers plan activities within the Reception classrooms with these in mind.

They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think creatively and critically about the world around them.

The characteristics are;

★ Having their own ideas (creative thinking)

- Thinking of ideas that are new and meaningful to the child
- Playing with possibilities (what if? what else?)
- Visualising and imagining options
- Finding new ways to do things

★ Making links (building theories)

- Making links and noticing patterns in their experience
- Making predictions
- Testing their ideas
- Developing ideas of grouping, **sequences, cause and effect**

★ Working with ideas (critical thinking)

- Planning, making decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal
- Checking how well their activities are going
- Flexibly changing strategy as needed
- Reviewing how well the approach worked



Learning and Teaching

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing.

In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete an activity with them; at other times they will participate in a child's own learning, extending it where possible.



Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Foundation Stage classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them.

Using high quality, language-rich texts as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world.

We also act upon what the children say and interests we have observed to further enrich the learning environments and regularly incorporate the children's interests and ideas into the planning of our enrichment activities.

Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own.

They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child-initiated play and adult led activities is very important to us.

Teaching and learning

We include direct, carefully planned adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching, and adult led group activities.

These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge which we encourage them to use in their own play.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place.

We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in differentiated groups

These activities include:



Maths



Literacy



Phonics Incorporating the
Read-Write Inc. scheme

The children use the indoors and outside has an attached outside learning area. The children have opportunities within their environment to learn together during free flow times, accessing shared continuous provision as well as whole class lessons and smaller teacher-led focused times. Part of their outdoor learning also involves Forest Fun sessions in our wooded area at school. Here the children are able to experience the natural world first-hand and enjoy observing and exploring throughout the changing seasons.

We are dedicated to providing excellent pastoral care and education to those children in our care.

Staff are fully qualified, have a wide range of experience and expertise in working with and educating children. The staff are committed to professional development and when appropriate attend up to date training courses and have excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and child development.

Observations

Foundation Stage staff use informal observations as the basis for planning. Staff observe children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Significant milestones, which we call 'magic moments' are recorded and shared with parents via Class Dojo.

Assessment

During the first half term staff assess the ability of each child using a baseline assessment.

These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching for individual children and groups of children.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves teachers, teaching assistants and apprentices. We share the information with parents and carers in our end-of-year pupil reports on their child's attainment and progress.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc.

Children have access to both inside and outside areas across their day.

Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and creative.



Parents and Carers as Partners

We greatly value the involvement of parents in school. Parental involvement with school begins even before children start Nursery with an invitation to visit the school and meet their child's teacher and during Nursery home visits staff meet the child in their own home environment and allows the child to feel more comfortable knowing that when they come to school where they can immediately see familiar face.

Parents' evenings are held in the Autumn and Spring Term at which parents are invited to discuss their child's progress. A report is sent out at the end of the Summer term and parents are invited into school to discuss this report if they wish. It is important to stress that if parents are concerned in any way about their child they should telephone or call into the school to make an appointment to discuss their concerns with the class teacher, Foundation Stage unit leader or the Headteacher.

Parents are kept informed of all school events by regular newsletters. Foundation Stage parents are informed via a weekly 'Learning Log' which is published on Class Dojo. A hard copy of this is also placed in the classroom windows.

Parents are invited to various assemblies and performances during the year. We also have a weekly 'Stay and Read' session for parents to come and share a book with their child. The Nursery class teacher will inform parents when these sessions are due to start.

Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle into their new class quickly and happily.

When children join the school in September they do so using a 'staggered system' over the first three weeks of term.



Safeguarding & Welfare

At Higher Failsworth we:

- Provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See HFPS Safeguarding Children Policy)

