Hotwells
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

CATHEDRAL SCHOOLS TRUST

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

2. The Early Years at Hotwells Primary School

The Early Years setting at Hotwells Primary School provides a safe and happy environment where we want our children to thrive. We know that children learn best when they are happy and secure in their surroundings, when they are interested and engaged in their learning and where they build positive and meaningful relationships.

Hotwells Primary School currently operates a Reception class which form our EYFS provision.

Our Reception class is overseen by a qualified teacher with additional support staff. Reception children should attend school for five days a week after their staggered start.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. This is made up of four overriding principles upon which our Early Years education is based:

- Unique Child – Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships – Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- 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 carers.
- Learning and Development – Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

3. Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the CUSP Early Foundations curriculum aligning with the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021. The CUSP Early Foundations Curriculum consists of three elements:

1. Foundational knowledge: What pupils should know and be able to do throughout the EYFS and how this will support their development and prepare them for Key Stage 1.

2. Opportunities and experiences: How this foundational knowledge can be learnt through play and through guided activities that will allow pupils to explore, experiment with and think hard about new and important concepts.

3. Structured Story Time: Core texts that will introduce key language, ideas and themes that pupils will need to access the foundational knowledge, built into a framework of Structured Story Times.

Our Curriculum at Hotwells Primary School supports the main aims of the updated Early Years Framework to improve outcomes at age 5, particularly in early language and literacy. We understand the fundamental importance of all pupils having access to rich language from the earliest possible stage. For this reason, the CUSP EYFS Core Literature Spine sets out twenty-five core texts that have been carefully selected for each of the following three age ranges:

- 2 – 3 years
- 3 – 4 years
- 4 – 5 years (which is used in our Reception).

These core texts contain key themes, ideas and language that we believe are fundamental for laying strong foundations in the EYFS and beyond. Each core text will be presented with a Structured Story Time including vocabulary instruction, fluency and oracy opportunities and Thinking Hard questions. Further opportunities to explore these texts will be planned directly into continuous provision for the children to explore and challenge themselves during child initiated learning. By introducing children to the CUSP curriculum, this also prepares them for the CUSP curriculum we follow at Key Stage 1 and beyond.

We also understand that great Early Years practice responds to pupils' needs, talents and interests. In addition to the core literature spine we observe children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals. Time in the curriculum will also be allocated to explore and extend children's awareness of cultural capital, religious festivals and their local demographic. All the seven 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.

These three areas are the prime areas:

Communication and Language	Physical Development	Personal, Social and Emotional Development
• Listening, attention and understanding • Speaking	• Gross motor skills • Fine motor skills	• Self-regulation • Managing self • Building relationships

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

Literacy	Mathematics

• Comprehension • Word reading • Writing	• Numbers • Numerical patterns
Understanding the World	**Expressive Arts and Design**
• Past and present • People, culture and communities • The natural world	• Creating with materials • Being imaginative and expressive

We recognise that teaching can take place at all times of the day through directed teaching sessions, through times of play and inside and outside the classroom. We encourage all of these. We strive to make our environments where children, staff and volunteers seize every opportunity for learning.

It is our aim that children leave the EYFS with:

- A readiness for the next stage in their learning;
- As Ambitious and Creative learners, with an understanding of how they can be positive Local and Global Citizens;
- A positive 'can do' attitude to learning;
- A willingness to take risks and make mistakes;
- High levels of engagement in tasks where they can practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills;
- Perseverance;
- A love of learning;
- Ideas of their own, that they can plan and follow through;
- An ability to express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Planning

Class teachers will plan for focused activities in Phonics, Mathematics and Structured Story Time each week, to ensure individual progress across these specific areas of learning occur. We create an attractive, open ended and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment which is set up in discreet areas of learning and planned continuous provision.

Phonics

At Hotwells, we follow the 'Unlocking Letters and Sounds' phonics scheme. As part of this, class Teachers track the progress of each child, and plan and teach Phonics that target all children's

specific developmental needs. Rapid interventions are used to consolidate any gaps in the children's phonetic knowledge.

We aim for Reception children to use their developing skills in reading and writing within their play environment. As children develop their awareness, listening and concentration children are then exposed to grapheme-phoneme correspondence during continuous provision.

Mathematics

Reception teachers plan activities using Numbersense and White Rose Maths schemes of work. Class teachers plan for whole-class mathematics sessions to ensure children are equipped with the necessary skills to engage in problem solving, and solve mathematical problems during their play. Class teachers track the progress of each child and plan and teach mathematical concepts through small guided group sessions.

Structured Story Time

The CUSP Early Foundations curriculum provides carefully planned Structured Story Time with vocabulary, fluency and oracy instruction across Reception.

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

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

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Inclusion and SEND in the Early Years

At Hotwells, we welcome pupils from our local community and across the city. We pride ourselves on providing equal opportunities for all children and, as such, will make reasonable adjustments in the four areas of SEND; Cognition and Learning; Communication and Interaction; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties.

To meet children's additional needs in Reception, we have a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who coordinates this provision through a skilled team of teachers and support staff. Our SENCO is Mrs. Claire Burn and she can be contacted via the School Office. In discussion with the parents and the children, school staff may put in place additional support that is targeted to meet the needs of the children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

4. Assessment in EYFS

At Hotwells Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. As part of daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future planning and move children's learning on. We record observations of children in a variety of ways including the class story section on Class Dojo, and on occasions through a child's individual portfolio.

When a child is aged between 3 and 4, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the three prime areas. This progress report highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts Reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This is a statutory assessment which provides a snapshot of where pupils are when they arrive at school. It will provide a starting point to measure progress children make between Reception and the end of primary school.

During the final term of Reception, we provide the parents with a report based on their child's progress within the EYFS Profile. Parents/carers are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the class teacher. In addition to this, parents are kept informed of their child's progress through two formal parents' meetings each year: these take place during the autumn and spring terms.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals (ELGs), indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development.
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Birth to 5 Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the Local Authority.

5. Working with Parents

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and 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. Our main route of parental contact is through the online application of Class Dojo. As previously mentioned, we also have two parents' evenings each year. In addition to this, we encourage parental engagement through several events, including Phonics Information Meetings, Story Shares and Open Classroom events.

Talking to parents/carers about their child before they start school, completing home visits in a majority of cases. Supporting children through the transition from preschool/nursery to Reception; members of the team visit or communicate with the main feeder nurseries and preschool where applicable, to meet the children and discuss progress with their keyworkers.

6. Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

At Hotwells, there are clear procedures for assessing risk including procedures for keeping children safe both in and outside of schools. These will be introduced to children in an age-appropriate way. The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times, we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Local Governing Body every two years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.