



Sir Edmund Hillary Academy EYFS Policy

We are a LEAD Academy Trust setting

Rationale

Our EYFS curriculum and pedagogy aligns with our academy values, C.L.I.M.B.

Courage; bravery to initiate and embrace challenge

Learning and Achieving

Including everyone and inspiring individuals

Mindful and reflective

Building a safe and loving community.

We adhere to our whole academy rationale and our choices behind our curriculum are based on this and the current context of our school. Our curriculum reflects our ethos and aims for our academy as well as the context from which our children derive.

High quality care and education is provided for all children in line with the EYFS Statutory Framework and accompanying academy policies.

Purpose of the Policy

To ensure a consistent approach to all aspects of our Early Years practice from Nursery to Foundation 2 by:

- enabling all staff in Early Years to provide a curriculum that takes account of children's starting points and enables children to make progress no matter what their starting point.
- enabling all staff in Early Years to quickly identify children who may be disadvantaged and who may require intervention to catch up and keep up.
- enabling all staff in Early Years to quickly identify children who may have SEND and who may require intervention to catch up and keep up or require individualised targets.
- enabling all staff in Early Years to teach through effective Early Years pedagogy.
- enabling all staff in Early Years to recognise the importance of working with parents.
- enabling all staff in Early Years to formatively assess regularly and frequently and to understand Early Years summative assessment methodology.
- enabling all staff in Early Years to prepare all children for the next phase in their education.



The Best for Every Child

We ensure we provide the highest quality education for all children in Early Years by making sure we know everything about them as soon as possible. We do this by:

- Prioritising the building of positive relationships with children in our care and ensuring that they feel happy, safe and settled with us.
- Encouraging parents to attend Stay and Play sessions that give staff, parents and children time to bond, share information and get to know one another. Staff complete an All About Me alongside parents during these visits.
- Visiting children in their previous setting and discussing children with staff.
- Completing an initial on entry assessment when children start to attend with us.
- Completing a speech and language screening assessment for all children who we identify as needing additional support. This assessment provides information about areas of difficulty and gives a focus for 1:1 interventions.
- Completing the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment.
- Assessing phonic and reading capabilities half termly and, where children are at risk of falling behind, 1:1 interventions are put in place and additional reading takes place. Children are re-assessed after 3 weeks and the focus for interventions constantly evolves to take into account the children's current knowledge.

We know that many disadvantaged children need more chances to develop their language and communication and to learn the knowledge they need. We also know that there is a gap between boys and girls from disadvantaged backgrounds, where boys are more likely to fall behind in communication and language by the age of 5. Because of this we:

- Provide children with 'cultural capital', defining this as 'the essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future success'. This includes developing their language ability, learning how to behave in different social situations and enhancing their knowledge and enjoyment of literacy.
- Provide additional support to develop their 'literary' cultural capital, including pre-teaching and additional reading.
- Aim to enhance all children's experiences and opportunities but particularly those of the most disadvantaged children. This includes engaging with the locality, going on school trips and encouraging visitors into school, as well as opportunities within the continuous provision to widen and develop their interests.
- Keep disadvantaged children and those identified as needing to make accelerated progress at the forefront of our minds, completing monitoring forms in order to identify what is preventing the child from progressing and what we can do to potentially combat this.
- Use strategies such as pre-teaching, small group teaching, extra reading sessions and 1:1 intervention.

The priority for all our children is to ensure they have the cultural capital to succeed. This means we focus on ensuring children feel safe and secure by imposing boundaries. This enables children to understand our expectations from the start.



High Quality Care

We know that if a child is to make strong progress, know more and remember more, then they need to feel safe, secure and happy. Because of this we:

- Make it obvious to the children that we love spending time with them.
- Use a key worker system in Nursery and Foundation 1, where adults prioritise building strong relationships with children, getting to know them as individuals, their interests, strengths and needs.
- Prioritise the development of vocabulary and children being able to articulate their wants, needs and feelings.
- Ensure that children transition smoothly between classes at the end of the school year, giving children ample time and opportunities to play, explore and enjoy time in their new learning space, with new and current key workers.

The Curriculum

We provide a bespoke curriculum covering the 7 areas of learning defined by the EYFS, which is language rich and based around high quality texts. All staff are ambitious for every child and our aim is that every child reaches the ELG in the prime areas and Literacy and Maths to enable them to reach a good level of development. This aim has guided the development of our progressive and well sequenced curriculum. Children learn essential skills and knowledge and every effort is made to engage and motivate them to want to learn.

What makes us unique:

- We have many children who start their education with us from 2 years old. This allows us to support and develop children's language skills from a very young age and start making a positive difference to disadvantaged children early in their lives.
- We used a themed approach, with key knowledge and skills outlined for each theme in each year group. However, this is flexible enough, particularly in Nursery and Foundation 1, to go with the children's interests and allow them to take their learning in a different direction during independent play.
- Our themes are chosen to give children a breadth of knowledge across the whole curriculum. This knowledge is progressive across our EYFS, with lots of opportunities to revisit and review previous learning. The knowledge and skills children acquire provide the necessary building blocks for later success in KS1.
- We use Rosenshine Principles during direct teaching, with a great focus on children knowing more, understanding more, being able to do more and remembering more.
- A respect for the environment and each other as part of the curriculum.
- We follow the White Rose Maths approach for Foundation 2 children, with Little Big Maths CLIC learning woven in to support and extend the learning of key facts.
- We follow Little Wandle Letters and Sounds as our systematic, synthetic phonics programme.
- A structured approach to the development of self-regulation is developed through our bespoke PSED progression, from Nursery to Foundation 2. Children are taught, through direct teaching and modelling, how to behave and communicate with each other respectfully, using developmental sentence stems.



- Themes and accompanying high quality texts are chosen to reflect themselves and the diverse world we live in. Children are encouraged to play, explore and develop their individual interests as well as explore beyond this and broaden their experiences.
- Get Set for PE is introduced in Foundation 1 onwards.
- For children that are disadvantaged or who have SEND, adaptations are made to the curriculum to ensure children continue to make progress. Disadvantaged children are identified early and monitored closely, with adaptations being made as necessary with the aim that children make more rapid progress. SEND children are assessed using B Squared and, where appropriate AET and Boxall Profiling. Some children with SEND benefit from spending time in The Hive, working on their specific targets in an environment built around their needs.

Early Reading

Our ambition is that all children will reach the Early Learning Goal in Reading by the end of Reception. To maximise children's potential to achieve this we:

- Prioritise the development of language through key vocabulary and sentence structure. Adults use well established Let's Interact Strategies and have extensive practise in extending early language. More complex vocabulary and sentence structures are introduced as children move through Foundation 2.
- High quality texts, which include fiction, non-fiction and poetry are carefully selected to be progressive and, for some texts, cyclical. Foundation 2 children learn to recite poems at various points through the year, including for our academy Poetry Slam. Children are taught to orally retell rhymes and stories and given sentences structures to enable them to retell the rhymes and stories effectively.
- Read to, or with, the children three times a day.
- Follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds programme with fidelity. Their Foundation for Phonics programme is adopted and adapted for our youngest Nursery children and embedded within Foundation 1. Children have a daily 'Love of Reading' session, a Rhyme Time session and, in Foundation 1 a Phonics: Tuning into Sounds time, where children play an oral blending and a phonemic awareness game every day. These sessions are carefully planned for, with a significant focus on language development.
- Foundation 2 children all have Reading Practise sessions three times per week, starting with wordless books and, once children are confident and ready, with worded books that are carefully matched to their own level of ability. Reading Practise sessions are focussed on Decoding, Prosody and Comprehension, with the overall aim of developing children's fluency in reading. Children who are in need of extra reading, either because they are not keeping up with the pace of teaching or because an individual need has been identified that week, have daily 1:1 reading alongside their phonic intervention.
- After children have read their new book at least 3 times at school, they will take it home to read the following week. Parents are supported through the Reading Log, a group parents meeting and 1:1 parent teacher meetings, so that they feel confident in how to support their child with reading.
- Children also take a 'Reading for Pleasure' book home with them. Children have chosen this book themselves based on their own interests, peer



recommendations or because it has been promoted during our 'Book Club' style sessions.

- Books, particularly non-fiction texts are embedded within the continuous provision alongside our small world and role play.
- Story Corners are inviting and adults spend time making sure that they are stocked with quality texts, both fiction and non-fiction and that books are front facing. Adults read the books that are in the story corners, ensuring that children are familiar with the texts. We promote reading as an enjoyable activity by making areas comfy, modelling reading for pleasure and providing interesting small world in order to retell stories. Particularly in Nursery and Foundation 1, adults prioritise time to read to children during Exploring Times.

Pedagogy

Our pedagogy is a mix of approaches including:

- Modelling our values through everyday practice, promoting and modelling positive interactions in an environment where children feel safe and secure.
- Adults developing positive relationships with children, thus enabling them to flourish.
- Adults continually model high-quality interactions and relationships and children are praised when they demonstrate these skills. As adults interact with children during planned and child-initiated play they model language, show, explain, demonstrate, explore ideas, encourage, question, recall and provide a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges.
- Direct vocabulary teaching and modelling – we know that this is an important way to learn new vocabulary.
- Taught lessons, group work, independent work, 1:1 learning. Lessons start with the revisiting of knowledge and previous learning and children are scaffolded through modelling: 'I do, we do, you do'.
- The indoor and outdoor classrooms support and respond to children learning and development needs. Children have access to free flow learning between the indoor and outdoor classroom.
- Children have 2 defined continuous provision blocks each day, where they will practise and apply taught skills and knowledge, develop the characteristics of effective learning and follow their own interests. In Foundation 2, children have 2 shorter blocks in the morning (one indoor and one outdoor), with an afternoon block that is free-flow indoor and outdoor.
- In Reception the delivery of learning and the completion of activities is more structured in preparation for Year 1. In Year 1, continuous provision carries on for a period to ease transition.
- Weekly phase meetings are used to develop staff knowledge and understanding. Sessions include training, time to discuss disadvantaged children and to moderate.
- For children that are disadvantaged or who have SEND, adaptations are made to the implementation of the curriculum to ensure children continue to make progress and it is appropriate.
- Children with English as an additional language are supported to access the curriculum as well as being supported within their acquisition of the English



language. Effort is made to ensure parents are kept informed of the curriculum content and their child's progress.

Self-Regulation and Executive Function

We know how important it is for children to develop the ability to self-regulate their feelings and behaviour, to be able to organise themselves and their thinking and develop strong listening, attention and memory skills.

Because of this we:

- Develop the listening and attention skills of our youngest children in Nursery, through structured, planned for and progressive activities during short guided group sessions.
- Prioritise language development, knowing that this is central to self-regulation and children's abilities to use language to guide their actions and plans.
- Actively teach what good 'carpet skills' look like, using simple language and Makaton signing to support. Adults model and praise positive behaviours.
- Supported by Rosenshine Principles, adults help children to be able to hold things in their working memory, through simple games such as Kim's Games, and also encourage children to reflect and recall knowledge and events that have already taken place.
- Encourage children to make simple plans during play and to talk about their ideas and intentions. Adults use Sustained Shared Thinking techniques to support children to think deeper, to keep on trying and to persist in solving a problem. We know that pretend play gives many opportunities for children to focus their thinking, persist and plan ahead.
- Have a detailed, well thought out PSED progression, building from Nursery to Foundation 2, where children are directly taught how to express and manage their feelings, how to play together effectively and how to care for our environment. They are taught to say things such as, 'Stop! I don't like that,' and, 'Would you like to play with me?' They also learn specifically how to ask to go to the toilet or for a snack. Children are taught new words and sentence stems, questions and statements as the years unfold. This links to personal needs and the content of the curriculum.
- Encourage children to tidy the equipment and areas carefully so everything has its place and is well looked after. We do this by:
 - Showing children what a tidy area looks like
 - Introducing equipment slowly during the first half term and showing children how to tidy it away.
 - Managing the tidying up time by giving children praise and direction as they complete their tasks. This enables them to know what success looks like and what the expectation is. Photographs can help this process.
 - As the year progresses, children are given more responsibilities and tidying up time becomes quicker and more efficient.
- The environment is planned to ensure all children's needs are met. This is done through:
 - An organised environment that contains what the children need at the current time to be successful in learning and to make them feel like they belong. For example, there will be room for children to display their own



pictures, therefore raising their self-esteem. In the writing area, words that are relevant at the current time are available for children to use to enable them to write.

- Supporting children's long term memory by reducing cognitive load through ensuring the environment does not contain lots of colours, lights or unnecessary words. The backing on the walls is neutral in colour so as not to overstimulate and distract from what is being displayed.

Assessment

We know that adults who are closely connected to children, who spend lots of time playing and interacting and getting to know them can make accurate judgements and notice what children can do and what they know. We know that this formative assessment is crucial to moving children's learning forward and scaffolding further learning so that children can make progress.

We know that the most effective practitioners:

- Build strong, close relationships with children.
- Understand child development
- Know our curriculum and what we expect children to know. They return to previous learning, revisiting and reviewing regularly and building on prior knowledge.
- Use formative and summative assessment to give a clear picture of where children are up to in their learning and development and use this knowledge to deepen and extend learning.

Ways we assess children:

- Information is gathered from previous providers and from parents.
- The Reception Baseline Assessment is completed within 6 weeks of the children starting Foundation 2.
- Our detailed benchmarking system flows from Nursery, through Foundation 1 and Foundation 2 and transition between year groups runs smoothly.
- Summative assessment takes place every 10 weeks and is added to the assessment database. Following this, pupil progress meetings take place each term in Foundation 2 and, in Nursery and Foundation 1, parents receive a written report after each assessment point. Information is gathered through observations and discussion with adults.
- Day by day information is gathered through simple assessment of anything children produce.
- Assessments are made half termly in phonics, using Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Assessment protocol and children are regrouped for Reading Practise sessions as necessary.
- Children with SEND are assessed against individual targets using B Squared and, where appropriate, AET and/or Boxall Profile.
- Children who are disadvantaged or falling behind are assessed against current learning to ensure gaps are filling and they are catching up and/or keeping up. Teachers monitor children at risk of falling behind more closely and time within



phase meetings is allocated to thinking about strategies and ways to support these children.

- Misconceptions and gaps are identified and addressed for all children throughout their learning each day.
- EYFSP assessments take place within the summer term and information is passed to the local authority and moderation takes place within the MAT.
- Detailed information is shared with Year 1 teachers when children leave early years. Where children have not met the ELG, working closely with Year 1 to discuss individual children's strengths, areas of needs and what works well for them.
- Parents receive a written report and are invited to attend parent's meetings throughout the year.

Parents As Partners

We value parents as partners and always develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We understand that parents are children's first educators and we value the contribution they make.

How we do this:

- Before children start attending, parents are invited to Stay and Play sessions and are encouraged to share information about their child, including the completion of our All About Me.
- Parents are invited to Parental Engagement Sessions at least termly, where the focus is on sharing learning with families, providing information about how to support learning at home and celebrating children's success.
- Parents receive a half termly Newsletter in all year groups that contains key information about the upcoming learning, ways to support language development, literacy and PSED. Links to valuable websites are included using QR codes to make information as easily accessible as possible.
- In Foundation 2, parents are given a Knowledge Organiser each half term to share the key knowledge we expect all children to acquire.
- Parents are encouraged to share information about their child's learning through our 'Wow Box' system.
- We have good links with Children's Centres and a link family support worker. Adults encourage and support referrals and promote the universal services that are on offer in the community.