

Holt Farm Infant School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support to fulfil their potential. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

(Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework)

Introduction

At Holt Farm Infant School, we believe that every child is entitled to a happy, secure and stimulating start to their education. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Our Reception provision provides children with rich, meaningful learning experiences that support their development across all areas of learning.

We follow the current Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework and ensure that all children are supported to learn, develop and thrive in a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment. We work closely with parents and carers to provide high-quality care and education that lays strong foundations for future learning and prepares children for a successful transition into Key Stage 1. We have regard to Keeping children safe in education, ensuring that safeguarding, welfare and children's wellbeing underpin all aspects of our provision. We are committed to creating a secure, stimulating and supportive environment where children feel safe, valued and confident to explore, learn and achieve their full potential.

Our curriculum is ambitious for all children and is designed to develop confident, independent and resilient learners who are equipped with the knowledge, skills and vocabulary they need for future success.

Play

At Holt Farm Infant School, we recognise that play is fundamental to children's learning and development. Through play, children explore the world around them, investigate ideas, solve problems, communicate with others and develop their creativity and imagination.

We provide well-planned opportunities for children to engage in both child-initiated and adult-led play experiences, indoors and outdoors. Play enables children to practise new skills, consolidate learning and apply their knowledge in meaningful contexts.

Through high-quality play experiences children develop:

- Communication and language skills
- Social and emotional skills
- Physical development
- Creativity and imagination
- Problem-solving and critical thinking skills
- Confidence, resilience and independence

Practitioners carefully observe and interact with children during play, extending learning through questioning, modelling and introducing new ideas and vocabulary.

Teaching and Learning

At Holt Farm Infant School, we provide a balance of adult-led learning, guided group activities and child-initiated learning opportunities. Teaching is designed to meet the needs of all children and build upon their existing knowledge, skills and experiences.

Learning is carefully planned to ensure progression across all areas of the EYFS curriculum. Staff use ongoing assessment to identify children's strengths, interests and next steps, adapting teaching and provision accordingly.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

- **Playing and Exploring:** Children investigate and experience things and are encouraged to have a go.
- **Active Learning:** Children concentrate, keep trying when they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically:** Children develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, solve problems and develop strategies for learning.

We aim to create enthusiastic learners who are motivated, engaged and willing to take risks in their learning.

The early years experiences we offer our children are based on the following principles:

- Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Unique Child

At Holt Farm Infant School, we believe that every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

We recognise that children develop at different rates and bring a wide range of experiences, interests and abilities to school. We give every child the opportunity to achieve their best by having realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children across the areas of learning and development. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with disabilities, children with additional educational needs, children with medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We are committed to ensuring that every child is valued, respected and supported to achieve their full potential.

We achieve this by:

- Having high expectations for all children.
- Planning learning opportunities that build upon children's interests and prior experiences.
- Providing appropriate challenge and support.
- Monitoring children's progress and providing additional support when identified
- Recognising and celebrating individual achievements.
- Supporting children's emotional wellbeing and self-esteem.
- Making reasonable adjustments to ensure all children can access the curriculum.

- Working closely with parents, carers and external agencies where appropriate.

We are committed to equality of opportunity and ensuring that every child feels valued and included within our school community.

Positive Relationships

At Holt Farm Infant School, we recognise that positive relationships are essential for successful learning and development. Children learn best when they feel safe, secure and valued.

We strive to build warm, trusting and respectful relationships between children, staff, parents and carers. We recognise parents and carers as children's first and most enduring educators and work in partnership with families to support children's development.

We promote positive relationships by:

- Developing strong home-school partnerships.
- Providing effective communication between school and families.
- Supporting children's emotional wellbeing.
- Modelling positive behaviour and respectful relationships.
- Encouraging cooperation, kindness and empathy.
- Helping children to develop confidence and independence.
- Creating a culture where every child feels listened to and respected.

These positive relationships help children feel secure and support them to become confident learners.

Enabling Environment

At Holt Farm Infant School, we recognise that the environment plays a vital role in supporting children's learning and development.

We provide a safe, stimulating and inclusive learning environment which encourages exploration, independence and curiosity. Our classrooms and outdoor areas are carefully organised to enable children to access resources independently and engage in purposeful learning.

We provide:

- Well-organised and accessible learning areas.
- A language-rich environment that promotes communication and vocabulary development.
- Resources that reflect diversity and the wider world.
- Opportunities for indoor and outdoor learning.
- Using the outdoor environment to enhance learning and development.
- Areas that promote creativity, investigation and problem-solving.
- Experiences that respond to children's interests and developmental needs.

The outdoor environment is viewed as an extension of the classroom and provides daily opportunities for physical development, exploration, investigation and imaginative play.

We promote the safe and appropriate use of technology and teach children how to use digital devices safely through age-appropriate learning experiences. Staff have regard to current guidance regarding children's screen use in early years settings.

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

At Holt Farm Infant School, we follow the seven areas of learning and development identified within the EYFS framework. All areas are important and interconnected.

Prime Areas

The prime areas are particularly important for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through the **specific areas**:

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

Children learn through a combination of:

- Adult-led teaching
- Guided group activities
- Continuous provision
- Child-initiated learning
- Indoor and outdoor experiences
- First-hand learning opportunities

Through high-quality interactions, effective teaching and purposeful provision, children develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to achieve the Early Learning Goals and make a successful transition to Key Stage One.

Assessment is ongoing and informs future planning to ensure that all children make good progress from their starting points and achieve their full potential.

Safeguarding and Welfare

At Holt Farm Infant School, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. We recognise that children can only learn effectively when they are healthy, safe and secure.

We follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the requirements of the Early years foundation stage statutory framework and Keeping children safe in education 2026. All staff receive safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities for identifying and reporting concerns regarding a child's welfare.

We ensure that:

- Children are taught how to stay safe, including online safety, in an age-appropriate way.
- Children are supervised appropriately at all times.
- Attendance and absences are monitored carefully.

- Children's emotional wellbeing and mental health are supported.
- Staff know how to report concerns about children or adults.
- Appropriate first aid and medical procedures are in place.
- Risk assessments are undertaken where necessary.
- Parents and carers are informed of any significant concerns regarding their child.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads provide support and guidance to ensure safeguarding procedures are consistently implemented throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years in consultation with staff and Governors.

Reviewed and adopted during	Autumn 2026
Approved by Governing Body	
Next review	Autumn 2028

Signed:

Chair of Governors