



STANDARD 12 – Learning and Development

Standard 12.1– EYFS Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stages is a curriculum framework ([Click here to read the EYFS Statutory Framework](#)) for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. It encourages play based learning and aims to give children the ‘best possible start in life’ and sets the parameters for the curriculum we offer our children at Horsted Keynes Preschool, including the three Prime Areas of learning and development and four Specific Areas.

How does the Early Years Foundation Stage work?

The EYFS has been developed with parents, carers, early years and childcare providers and academics. It brings together their experience in a clear, straightforward way. The child is at the centre of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The people who work with your child will pick up on their interests and abilities and build on them through play.

Play is vital for children. Quite literally. It is through play that babies and young children learn, grow, and have fun. It helps them to understand the world around them and to develop socially and emotionally.

Free play is crucial to children’s development. It’s enjoyable and it helps children to develop their social skills and their self-regulation. Playing freely helps children to become more imaginative, more creative, and become better prepared to tackle difficult problems and solve them. High-quality play is supported by well organised environments which respond to children’s interests, and which widen those interests by introducing to children to new materials, experiences, activities, and artistic expressions.

By singing songs, reading together, playing games with letters and numbers, and having fun with friends gives them a head start. That means not just a happy childhood, but it also helps them with their confidence, so they can handle what life may bring them.

Learning through high quality play, that’s tailored to each individual child allows them to develop at their own pace, have fun, make friends, and learn as they play. It encourages them to Become confident, secure children who, when the time comes, are better prepared for school. Not pushed, not pressured. But ready to reach their potential!

Practitioners will constantly find fun ways to help your child develop and learn in all areas. All the while, making sure that each child in their care is getting the support they need, and above all is enjoying learning through play.

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework is made up of four overriding principles which our early year’s education is based upon:

- Unique Child – Every child is 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.

And contains 7 areas of learning. Three prime areas and four specific areas. All seven areas are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn.

The three prime areas are those which the children should develop first and are considered most essential for the healthy development and future learning of our children. These include development in:

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

As children grow and make progress in the prime areas, this will help them to naturally develop skills within the four specific areas. These are:

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

How we deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage?

At Horsted Keynes Preschool we deliver the EYFS through play, observation, and planning for every individual child as well as for all the children as a group within Preschool.

Our intent is that all children feel happy and confident enabling them to continue to develop a love of learning through play, resulting in them becoming kind, caring, curious, Imaginative and Respectful members of society. Our curriculum is led by the children's needs and interests based on the developmentally appropriate milestones, as outlined in the EYFS and Development matters. We use observation, 'In the moment' planning, and professional knowledge and understanding of the children to create and extend learning opportunities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum forms the underpinning and overarching framework for learning and development, for all the children in our care. We intend to enable our children to learn holistically, through play, experimentation, and exploration, while making friends and developing social skills. We endeavour to give the children the Cultural Capital they need for future success i.e., giving each child the best start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their full potential and achieve future success. We have created an environment that fosters personal, social and emotional development, and the development of self-esteem and self-efficacy to take forward into school and beyond.

Fundamental British Values (democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance) are at the heart of our curriculum and everything we do, we focus on promoting the more general concepts within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).



Our ambitious and inclusive curriculum educates all the children and contributes to a generation who will acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding to be able to succeed in society today. It empowers the child to learn and grow and is co-constructed by adults and children during the year, based on children's interests, themes, experiences and ideas that help broaden their perspective of what they enjoy and can be part of.

Although your child's learning is mainly child-led, we understand that children need knowledge, skills, and capabilities and that they don't know what they don't know, thus the need for 'scaffolding'.

One of the most powerful ways to help children's learning is 'scaffolding'. The idea behind scaffolding is that each child has two levels of development:

- what they can do on their own
- what they can do with the help of another person.

We are the adults with knowledge and the means of access to knowledge. It is our responsibility to make this available to our children but not through didactic prescription. Adult-guided activities will still occur in connection with special events such as Easter, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Bonfire night etc. These events give an experience of cultural experiences that children would be unlikely to self-initiate and enhance their understanding of the world around them.

Adults guide sessions a number of times throughout the day, in order to introduce or teach key concepts, knowledge or skills. These sessions include maths, phonics, stories, singing, social skills and games and the majority of the sessions are practical, hands-on activities for which learning is not written down. Most sessions will be planned in advance but are very flexible depending on children's progress and interests. These sessions also give children the opportunity to learn how to participate in group conversations, listening and speaking at appropriate times.

We ensure that our curriculum can support children with additional needs, those who are disadvantaged or in a minority group, ensuring inclusion for all. Our team value diversity and understand how to apply the EYFS to reflect this, we will work 1:1 or obtain additional support when needed.

Our intent is to enable all children to flourish from their individual starting points. We embrace what each family brings to our setting and work with them to support their children to become independent learners.

"I come not only with my own strengths but bring with me the gifts, talents and strengths of my family, tribe and ancestors."

-Te Whariki

Our pedagogy utilises aspects of different approaches and theorists such as Froebel, Reggio Emilio, Piaget, Vygotsky and 'In the moment'. We strongly align with the New Zealand early years curriculum Te Whāriki which focuses on embedding a sense of belonging and well-being interwoven with an awareness that the natural environment forms a strong learning context.

Our environment enables children to lead their own learning by following their individual interests. They are given meaningful experiences that allow them to build on the knowledge they already have. They have space to move, time for uninterrupted play and open-ended resources which enable them to think for themselves. They have opportunities to revisit learning and extend their investigations.

Revised and rewritten in line with new EYFS
September 2021



Our team plan 'In the moment', meaning each child receives a differentiated learning experience, and 'next steps' occur spontaneously. This ensures that all teachable moments are utilised. The focus child approach to observation, 'wow moments', and detailed tracking methods, enable assessments to be made regularly and fed back to parents. We believe that our approach, in conjunction with the EYFS, provides an optimal environment that perfectly suits the way that young children learn, play, and therefore thrive. The whole team work collaboratively, with a shared vision for the continuous provision, documentation and how we care for the children at our setting, which is reflected on daily, to adapt to all eventualities.

Each child has a key person who is responsible for monitoring their progress within the setting and for sharing and celebrating that progress with you. Your child's key person builds an Online Learning Journal which documents your child's progress within the EYFS while they are with us at Preschool. You have 24/7 access to the journal once your account has been set up.

We encourage you to contribute to your child's Learning Journal by adding comments, observations, and photos from home. We love to see what the children have been up to at the weekends and in the holidays and knowing this information helps us to build relationships and provide an environment that meets your child's individual interests.

We deliver the four overriding principles:

Unique Child

We understand the processes involved in children's growth, development, and learning, acknowledging that this is a process which cannot be rushed. Children are supported by practitioners to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture; this enables them to develop a positive self-image entitling them to enjoy a full life which helps them to take part in society. Practitioners recognise and praise effort as well as achievement so that all children develop positive attitudes to themselves as learners.

When children receive warm, responsive care they are more likely to feel secure and valued and to want to contribute to making the rules which make things 'fair' for everybody.

Positive Relationships

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together at Horsted Keynes Preschool, the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning. Parents are invited to add to planning by informing practitioners of their child's current interests, visits, or events verbally, by adding to Tapestry or by email.

Children feel a sense of belonging when their parents are also involved within the Preschool.

We strongly believe that a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise between parents and practitioners means effective communication. To enable this process to take place we create a warm welcoming environment with approachable practitioners.

Enabling Environments

The environment supports every child's learning style through experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable. Children benefit from direct personal participation of activities including those which are predictable, comforting and challenging. Learning is a continuous journey through



which children build on all the things they have already experienced and come across new and interesting challenges. Horsted Keynes Preschool offers a rich and varied environment which supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe yet challenging indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of children's development.

Learning and Development

“Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child's soul”

-Friedrich Froebel

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. Play with peers is important for children's development for both their social and emotional well-being. In their play children learn at their highest level.

Children need time to process their thinking, reflect and modify their learning whether indoors or outdoors to enable them to begin problem solving and making their experiences meaningful. When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Learning and development will be facilitated through the use of flexible resources, and sensitive intervention of a knowledgeable practitioner, who will scaffold the child's learning building on what they already know, enhancing their ability to think critically and ask questions.

At Horsted Keynes Preschool play is valued and is seen as an opportunity for children to rehearse, reorder, and develop ideas and experiences, enabling them to gain the necessary skills required for their future economic well-being. We recognise that children learn through active participation by being engaged with other people, objects, ideas and events for sustained periods of time. As active learner's children need to have some independence and control over their learning to keep their interest and to develop their creativity. As children become absorbed in finding out about the world around them through their explorations, investigation and questions they feel a sense of achievement and their self-esteem and confidence grows. As children grow in confidence, they learn to make decisions.

Our curriculum incorporates the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum as well as opportunities and experiences which best meet the children's developmental and learning needs, allowing them to flourish. It is our intention that children experience the seven areas of learning, through playing and learning 'in the moment'.

The Areas of Development and Learning comprise:

Prime areas

- Communication and language
- Personal, social, and emotional development
- Physical development

Specific areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world



- Expressive arts and design

For each area, the level of progress that children are expected to have attained by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is defined by the Early Learning Goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know, and be able to do, by the end of the reception year of their education.

The Development Matters guidance sets out the likely stages of progress a child makes along their learning journey towards the Early Learning Goals. Our setting has regard to these matters when we assess children and plan for their learning.

Our curriculum supports children to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for:

Communication and language

- Listening, attention & understanding
- Speaking

“The child begins to perceive the world not only through his eyes but also through his speech”
-Vygotsky

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.

In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening, and by hearing and responding to stories, songs, and rhymes. We build children’s language effectively by commenting on what they are interested in or doing and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added.

We are passionate about creating opportunities for children to become effective communicators and to be able to communicate more easily through developing language and communication skills. We focus on promoting communication and language to widen children’s vocabulary throughout the Preschool

The development of children’s language and communication skills is valued. We introduce them to new vocabulary, modelling the language of sustained, shared thinking and engage them in conversations about their interests. We enable children to thrive by frequently reading to them 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. They are taught a wide repertoire of rhymes, poetry, stories, non-fiction books and songs and their love of reading is extended through the sharing of good quality texts.

We use ‘core texts’ which we read frequently with the children. These books are the type of books that can be re-visited again and again on different levels to support language development. The idea is that children will develop language and increase vocabulary in addition to gaining a love of stories and books and they will become very familiar with these known texts so that they can remember and re-tell them. We also have ‘core rhymes’ which support language development and which the children are hopefully familiar with by the time they leave us



Through conversation, storytelling, and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from us, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Personal, social, and emotional development

- Self-Regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

“Children do learn what they live. Then they grow up to live what they've learned”

-Dorothy Nolte

Children's personal, social, and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world.

Within a nurturing environment, children are individually supported in managing emotions, developing a positive sense of self, setting themselves simple goals, having confidence in their own abilities, persisting, and waiting for what they want and directing attention as necessary. They learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others.

Through adult modelling and guidance, they learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. They are encouraged to work and concentrate independently and through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate, and resolve conflicts peaceably.

These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Physical development

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills

“The wider the range of possibilities we offer children, the more intense will be their motivations and the richer their experiences”

-Loris Malaguzzi

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy, and active lives. Gross and fine motor skills develop incrementally throughout early childhood and provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. A range of equipment and opportunities, both indoors and outdoors and a high level of adult supervision enables children to create and meet physical challenges safely and allows them to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination, and agility.

Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control, and confidence.

We have a particular passion for outdoor learning and each day we go outdoors to play and learn, often going on adventures in the wider community.



We allow children to engage in 'risky play'. This does not mean allowing them to participate in potentially dangerous activities. Instead, it means we encourage children to push their limits and extend their abilities in a controlled environment. What is risky play to one child might not be risky play to another, however. We encourage the children to take ownership of their own safety. Of course, we keep an eye on them and we know our children well enough to understand their physical limitations and when we need to step in. However, we do encourage the children to push the boundaries of what they can do. We try to refrain from saying 'Be careful', as this can instil fear in children and highlight our lack of trust in their own judgements. Instead, we try to use phrases such as:

- Take your time
- What is your next move?
- Which part of your body might you bump if you do that?
- Do you feel stable?
- Do you feel safe there?
- I'm here if you need me.

Using such phrases allows children to develop their awareness of their surroundings. Engaging in risky play is a great way for children to practise problem-solving skills.

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word reading
- Writing

"We shouldn't teach great books; we should teach a love of reading"

-B. F. Skinner

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems, and songs together. A well-stocked book corner gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, able to handle them and aware of their uses, both for reference and as a source of stories and pictures. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purposes of writing and, when they are ready, to use drawn and written symbols for themselves. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing). We provide opportunities for children to see adults writing and for children to experiment with writing for themselves through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script.

Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical patterns

"Mathematics is not about numbers, equations, computations, or algorithms: it is about understanding"

-William Paul Thurston



Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Through activities and experiences such as cooking, children are encouraged to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. Songs, games and picture books help children become aware of number sequences and, when they are ready, to use simple mathematical operations such as adding and subtracting.

Providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and Numicon for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. We provide rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space, and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the world

- Past & present
- People, culture, and communities
- The natural world

"There are no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child. There are seven million"

-Walt Streightiff

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them. Children are assisted in exploring and understanding their environment, both within the group and within the wider community such as visiting the park or our local care home. We foster children's understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically, and ecologically diverse world, through listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains.

Children are ambitious and thrive on having control over their own learning. This exposure to rich experiences, which are connected to their existing knowledge, motivates them to learn. They find out for themselves by having a go at activities, asking their own questions, and thinking critically. The opportunities they have to revisit their learning supports them to consolidate their understanding and transfer new experiences into their long-term memory.

Expressive arts and design

- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative & expressive

"Our task, regarding creativity, is to help children climb their own mountains, as high as possible. No one can do more "

- Loris Malaguzzi

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. Children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts. They are encouraged to



explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, including paint, glue, crayons and pencils as well as natural and discarded resources, provides for open-ended exploration of colour, shape and texture and the development of skills in painting, drawing and collage. Children join in with and respond to music and stories, and there are many opportunities for imaginative role play, both individually and as part of a group. These quality opportunities which can be repeated time and again allow children to develop their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts.

We understand that the children's development within these areas is the key to promoting values in the long term.

Characteristics of effective learning

Higher levels of involvement and deeper interest are associated with activities where children have their own agency, choice, and control to pursue their schemes of thought. It is our responsibility to teach them this, but we do so according to what we know about their character, their heritage and lived experience – what has happened/is happening to them.

We understand our individual children learn in different ways and at different rates and we will guide, develop, and support their learning using the characteristics of learning most appropriate to them.

These are –

- Playing and exploring - Practitioners encourage a 'can do' attitude so children are willing to take a risk in new experiences.
 - encourage curiosity and independent exploration
 - extend children's learning
 - develop children's language
 - feed in new vocabulary and challenge children's thinking
 - Children are confident to try out new ideas and are not afraid to 'have a go'
- Active learning - Not to be confused with being physically active. In effective active learning, children maintain their attention for a period of time and are not easily distracted because they are interested and fascinated by the activity.
- Creating and thinking critically - Practitioners help children to develop so that they make connections in their learning, make predictions and are able to think things through.
 - Children learn to apply skills in different context and consider the best way of completing a task without waiting to be directed. Children are thinkers who make sense of their experiences. Using what they already know to learn new things, linking information as concepts are developed and linked together, finding meaning in sequence and cause and effect.
 - Children giving their own explanations about how they solve a problem learn more than when they receive positive feedback and/or explanation of



their errors-this is why young children watching and learning from older children benefits both

Children are enabled to build positive relationships with others through a 'key person' who gets to know the whole family well and helps their child settle into the Preschool routines. All adults are supportive; they value children's choices and decisions, get to know their individual learning styles and recognise that they develop in their own ways.

How do you know how your child's doing?

Here at Horsted Keynes Preschool we put together information on how your child is progressing. We take photographs and describe what they have been doing during the session or week and upload these to our online learning journal called Tapestry. We also keep a scrap book for each child which we fill with the drawings and craft that they have done during the session. We hold Parent consultations once per term, but we are always available for you to chat to during the sessions or email during the week.

Your child's learning will have ongoing reviews including three key assessments:

- The first is when they are between two and three years old and is called the '[2 year progress check](#)'.

If your child moves between early years providers between the ages of two and three, the review will usually be done by the early years childcare provider where your child spends the most time. Your childcare provider must give you a short-written summary of your child's development in the three prime areas of learning and development when your child is aged between 24 and 36 months. Undertaken in collaboration with parents, this can help practitioners to discuss how well the child is progressing, and how parents might further support their child's talking, playing and learning at home. The written summary must also tell parents if there are any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. This information should be shared with other relevant professionals, including your health visitor and the staff of any new provision your child may transfer to.

- The second is called 'The Reception Baseline Assessment' (RBA) which is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.
- The third is in the final term of the year in which they reach the age of 5, using the EYFS Profile. The Profile is a quick check of a child's learning at the end of the EYFS. Your child's school or early years provider must share the results of the profile with you. A copy will also be given to your child's Year 1 teacher to help plan activities which meet the stage of their development and learning needs.

We must also make sure your child has enough opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS. If your child's home language is not English, then we must give opportunities for your child to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home.

If you're worried about your child's progress, please talk to us and together you can agree how to support your child.

An integral aspect of the curriculum is that children are prepared for the future - during their time in Preschool they become fantastic role models and the very best version of themselves. Their individual identity is valued, and our children are kind and caring while also aspiring to be the best



that they can be, in whatever area they choose to pursue. We believe that every child is unique, and they all have a potential to achieve. The broad and balanced curriculum design ensures that the needs of individual children including EAL, SEND, Disadvantaged, Pupil Premium and small groups of children can be met within the environment of high-quality teaching supported by targeted interventions where appropriate.

From their different starting points, all children will make good progress academically, emotionally, creatively, socially, and physically. Knowledge, understanding and skills will be secured and embedded, so the children attain highly and are fully prepared for Primary School. We constantly receive positive feedback from feeder schools and parents about how our children are ready for school when they make the transition to Primary School.

The impact of our curriculum is measured by the whole team using assessment procedures so that activities can be planned in response to each child's developing needs. We analyse data from the whole cohort of children and measure the progress the children have made throughout the year. The impact of our curriculum will also be measured by how effectively it helps our pupils develop into well rounded individuals, who embody our values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens.

During their time with us children become highly motivated learners who demonstrate concentration, imagination, and deep engagement with their learning. They develop self-regulation and positive learning habits and leave as happy, independent individuals who can persevere even when faced with challenges, are confident in their abilities and ready to embrace new learning throughout their lives.

In the moment planning

We believe children are at the centre of what we do, and we believe that children learn best when they are interested, inquisitive and engaged, which at this age and stage of development, is best achieved through play. Play gives children the opportunity to explore their own interests, enquire, plan and take risks. Additionally, play also allows children to use their creativity, develop their imagination, build on their dexterity and physical skills, not to mention supporting the development of cognitive and emotional strength. Play is important to healthy brain development. It is through play that children engage and interact in the world around them.

Delivery of the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' curriculum (EYFS) involves a continuous cycle of three parts.

- **Observing children** – What can they do and what do they know?
- **Assessing based on those observations** - What is their next step?
- **Planning** – How I am going to teach them the next step?

We respect children as individuals and understand that they all develop differently. Therefore, on reflection, we felt that our previous method of planning, with a specific learning intention in mind, and then teaching to a small group was not necessarily the most effective method.

Firstly, it often interrupted what they were doing (something they had chosen to do, that they were deeply involved in) and therefore, understandably, we were met with reluctance and little engagement in what we were trying to do. Secondly, we weren't necessarily meeting the needs of individual children, due to planning for the entire cohort.

By following 'in the moment planning', a model developed by Anna Ephgrave, rather than adults deciding what children will be learning ahead of time, we engage with the children at activities they have chosen and teach the children 'in the moment'. Through play, children have access to all



aspects of the EYFS curriculum, all the time, without limits or adult agenda. This means that we can meet the needs of individuals more effectively.

Effective teaching

Teaching means systematically helping children to learn so that they make connections in their learning, are actively led forward, and can reflect on their learning. The more practitioners know about each child, the better they are able to support and extend each child's learning. Children need and will respond positively to challenges if they have a good relationship with the practitioner and feel confident to try things out. They shouldn't fear failure or ridicule. Practitioners who really know the children are able to judge when they are ready to be taught new skills.

Practitioners make time to really listen to children's views and act on them even when they do not match their own, identifying the right moment to intervene and move children's learning on, by perhaps joining in or asking a question.

In the model of 'in the moment planning' the role of the teacher looks a little different. The children will have free-flow access to the provision, which means that the children can choose where their learning takes place. The adult will stand back;

- observe children during play and tune into what they are saying and doing, and to interact when appropriate to move the learning on
- 'scaffold' the child's learning by modelling, asking questions to extend thinking, demonstrating, discussing, joining in, standing back and watching, introducing new resources or ideas,
- supporting and encouraging children to take risks and generally being the support that child needs to be the best that they can be.
- assess what they need to do/know/learn next
- plan their teaching, which will be delivered there and then

It is essential that adults take advantage of opportunities to seize the moment when a child shows a level of interest and curiosity that can be drawn out and then enhanced and built upon, "teachable moments". Teachable moments are about recognising that children often learn in an unconscious way during casual or less formal interactions. They require us to:

- Provide opportunities and environments that stimulate curiosity (each child will have different things that stimulate them – while one might enjoy painting, another might like dressing up)
- Observe and listen closely so they can follow the child's lead
- Pick up on the thing/place/person/idea that has sparked the child's interest
- Use open ended questions
- Praise and reinforce positive learning experiences

Practitioners need to be sensitive to teachable moments and mindful of how they can extend children's thinking across all areas of the EYFS curriculum. These teachable moments allow children to achieve next steps in their learning and development and are not something that are to be delivered at a point in the future, but right there 'in the moment'.

You may notice an adult standing back and watching. This is important part of our planning as adults need to be clear what the children are doing, to ensure that they can engage appropriately and enhance, not interrupt their play.



Here at Horsted Keynes Preschool practitioner observations, interactions and the outcomes of teachable moments are recorded and contribute to your child's 'Learning journey' on our online system 'Tapestry'. This approach supports children to develop as purposeful, calm, confident and independent learners. Our highly skilled teams support children to meet their next steps and drive their innate desire to learn forwards.

In the EYFS we record teaching and learning using Tapestry Online Learning Journals. In order to prioritise positive interactions over evidence collecting, we use a focus child system, with interactions being recorded for 2-3 children per week. Each half-term every child will be a focus child. This does not mean that the other children are not learning or getting adult interaction but rather that they are continuing with their own learning journeys independently, whilst we ensure that each child has equal opportunity for quality teaching and learning.

Most of the evidence of progress and learning comes from the adults' knowledge and understanding of the individual. In addition, 'wow' moments are added to journals as and when significant or new learning occurs. Each child has their own journal which parents are able to access and contribute to. Prior to each focus week, parents are encouraged to provide information about their child's current interests and any significant events taking place, which feeds into their learning that week. It is also an opportunity to share any questions or concerns regarding children's progress.

We also keep a scrap book for each child which we fill with the drawings and craft that they have done during the session. We encourage you to contribute to your child's Learning Journal by adding comments, observations, and photos from home. We love to see what the children have been up to at the weekends and in the holidays and knowing this information helps us to build relationships and provide an environment that meets your child's individual interests

We will continue to lead sessions for phonics with children.

How you can help

At the end of each week, we will email you an interest sheet.

All we ask is that you fill in the sheet, with as much detail as possible, and over the weekend add some photos of your child and family to your child's Tapestry account. You can even fill out the interest form, take a photo and add it to Tapestry instead of handing it back the following week.

Documenting Planning

As already mentioned, our planning is 'in the moment' and therefore documented retrospectively. We have a weekly sheet on which we make notes about what the children have been interested in, and learning, in each area. We use this to reflect on what is going well, what could be further developed or improved and respond to this as soon as possible. Additionally, for the focus each week, we record the observations, interactions and achievements throughout the week which are then collated onto Tapestry to show the children's learning journey for that week.

We plan sessions which are practical, engaging and active, giving the children the skills, they can use when accessing the environment independently.

Shared settings

If your child attends more than one setting, we would like to work with them to discuss your child's development and work together to provide a cohesive care package for you and your child.

Environment

Our learning environment consists of three areas, the main hall, the small hall and outdoors.

Each area is equally important, with a range of resources and equipment, which enable children to learn, working towards both the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' and the 'EYFS' outcomes.

For more details, please see our continuous provision plans which show the possible learning outcomes for each area.

Within the Preschool itself, children have access to:



- Maths/investigation station modelling area
- Reading/music area
- Construction area
- Snack Area
- Mark making station
- Home corner
- Malleable/sensory area
- Climbing frame
- Junk
- Small world area
- Dark den

Outdoors children can expect to find:

- Music area
- Sand experiences
- Mud Kitchen
- Slide
- Large construction
- Water experiences
- Investigation area
- See-saw
- Creative resources
- Growing area
- Balls/balancing
- Bikes/cars

Within the small hall, children have access to:

- Books
- Phonics
- Parachute
- Story/song time

Although we have designated 'stations' for reading, writing and maths, there are opportunities for these in all areas of our environment. Most areas have books in that are relevant to that area, for example, in our creative area you will find books about colour mixing or books with ideas of things to make. We also have boxes and baskets, filled with resources, that can be transported wherever the children desire.