



HAMPTON COURT HOUSE

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Early Years Curriculum – Updated March 2021 Daycare, Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Reception

Early learning is the foundation on which all children build the rest of their lives and learning. Our aim is to provide a stimulating and exciting environment in which the children develop their skills and make the best possible progress when they come to school, working closely with parents.

Pastoral Care

All children are supported in their growth and development, both physically and intellectually. This includes being loved and nurtured, feeling safe and secure and having the opportunity to learn through play. We adapt to the needs of the children and the families to ensure that they settle in happily. The Early Years team meet every week to discuss the children's wellbeing and development. Each Form Tutor also regularly meets the Head of Pastoral Care to discuss the welfare of the children in his or her class.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The learning experiences that children from birth until the end of the first year in school are engaged in are called "The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)". We offer a broad and balanced curriculum that is in line with and encompasses all areas of the EYFS. We employ qualified Early Years teachers and assistants who have experience of working in a nursery setting. This ensures high standards in terms of implementing and developing the curriculum in line with the EYFS.

The EYFS is a statutory framework issued by the Department for Education, which sets out the legal requirements for the care of young children in relation to Learning, Development and Welfare. It is a guide for the professionals working with children to support them as they develop new skills. It also defines the expectations for children's attainment once they reach the age of five, which are called "Early learning Goals" (ELG's).

We use the **Seven Areas of Learning and Development** when observing, assessing and planning a child's individual needs. These seven areas are split into **Two Parts**:

Part 1 - The Three Prime Areas of Learning and Development

- **Communication and language:** development involves giving children the opportunity to experience the rich language environment both to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and, to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development:** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive which improves their co-ordination, control and movement. Children are taught the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food.

- **Personal, social and emotional development:** involves helping children form a positive sense of themselves; to develop positive relationships and respect for others; to develop social skills and learn to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behavior in groups, and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Part 2 - The Four Specific Areas of Learning and Development

- **Literacy:** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics:** involves providing children with opportunities to improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the world:** involves guiding children to make sense of the physical world and the community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive art and design:** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Academic Foundations

- **Reading:** from Nursery, reading specialists develop the children's reading skills using the *Ruth Miskin Read and Write Method*, from learning phonics to becoming confident independent readers. The children have reading sessions three times a week being supported at their own individual pace and needs, as well as revising sounds and learning to decode in their daily English lesson. We would like children to develop a keen interest in reading and therefore ask all parents to read with their child as often as possible. The more they practise, the more quickly they will progress.
- **Spelling:** from confident phonetic reading, the children progress to independent phonetic writing. They begin with simple three-letter words and then incorporate digraphs such as 'th', 'sh' and 'ch' as well as trigraphs including 'igh' and 'ure'. Children will also learn tricky non-phonetic words.
- **Handwriting:** children are taught handwriting by first tracing over lines, shapes and then letters. They will gradually form letters in cursive mode, first in large size, then smaller
- **Mathematics:** numbers are all around us. In the Early Years children discover numeracy, problem-solving, reasoning and shapes. We aim to give the children many opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, to explore, enjoy, practise and talk about their developing mathematical understanding.
- **French:** studies show that children who learn another language early have better academic results and longer attention span. In Nursery and Reception, daily French sessions immerse the children in the language, along with weekly French Drama, Forest School and activities. As the children progress through Hampton Court House, they will become fluent French speakers in our unique bilingual environment.

The Arts – expression and creativity

- **Ballet (from Pre-Nursery):** children from Pre-Nursery take a weekly ballet class with a Royal Academy of Dance registered teacher. They follow the RAD Pre-Primary Dance Syllabus and focus on creativity and confident performance as well as developing their technique. At the end of each term the boys and girls perform in a ballet show or a showcase.
- **Art (From Nursery):** the children benefit from the expertise of teachers who cover a wide range of subjects. Children attend art lessons twice a week in a dedicated art studio, where they can develop their creativity and imagination using different techniques, materials and media. The Early Years art programme at Hampton Court House develops children's curiosity and sense of freedom to create confidently. The children are guided through an exploration of materials, colours, textures, shapes and forms as a way of developing their story-telling and investigate skills.
- **Music (from Nursery):** young children are very responsive to music. We encourage our children to get involved in performing and enjoying music making from a very tender age. They have music lessons once a week with a professional music teacher, where they sing, dance, listen to music of different eras and character, get introduced to different instruments and are encouraged to try them out. Children are able to develop their musicality further through individual voice and instrumental tutorials. They perform in recitals regularly throughout the year. All the children perform as a group in the Christmas and summer concerts.
- **French Drama (From Nursery):** drama opens diverse horizons for the children, giving them opportunities to express themselves with gesture and speech. The children act short scenes, stories and drama games. Drama in French also helps the children practise their language, gain self-confidence and boost their self-esteem.

Cultural Capital

The Early Years Inspection Framework 2019 states 'it is the role of the setting to help children experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live, through the seven areas of learning'. Cultural Capital is the knowledge and skills we can give to the children in our care to prepare them for future success. We try to look at what the children have been exposed to and what experience we can offer them. On top of their core subjects children have music, art, drama, sport, swimming and forest school with specialist teachers and they perform twice a year at our ballet shows and our Early Years concerts.

- **Discover the world around us:** the children are given opportunities to visit local places of interest such as Bushy Park, Hampton Court Palace, various museums in London, Bocketts Farm, and Kingston-upon-Thames to observe the architecture. They have the opportunity to use different types of transport (e.g. bus, boat).
- **Theatre:** children have weekly drama lessons, they regularly go to the theatre, for example the Lyric Theatre in Hammersmith, and we also have theatre companies coming to school.
- **Cultural and Religious Celebrations:** we introduce children to the main religious celebrations and invite parents to speak about their traditions and read stories.
- **Topics:** we have themed weeks such as 'the solar system', 'transport', etc.

British Values

- **Democracy:** the children are given opportunities to make decisions about choice of activities and resources they play with, for example in circle time and in activities, where they often choose what they want to play with. They regularly vote (especially in Reception where they start to understand the concepts of vote and majority) to choose stories during story time. They are also given the opportunity to discuss and ask questions, during circle time and lessons, in an environment where questions and enquiring minds are nurtured. Parents' voice is also essential. We encourage parents' voice through parents' evenings, an initial parental questionnaire, comments on Tapestry, a survey and the 'Little Friends' (our parents' association).
- **Rule of law:** children are taught the reasons and values behind rules. We look at rules that are put in place to protect us, and possible consequences if rules are broken. Rule of law is also about managing feelings and behaviour. We provide books and stories about characters who help each other, we talk about emotions and how to deal with them in a sensible way. We encourage children to resolve their conflict with their words.
- **Individual liberty:** we reflect on the fact that we are all different and we are free to have different opinions, we encourage discussions (especially during circle time) to talk about feelings and recognise that we all have different ideas and opinions. Children are encouraged to make choices knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. We provide boundaries for our young children to make choices safely for example in forest school where they are also allowed to take 'risks' and try new ideas. We encourage the children and celebrate their success by displaying their work in the classrooms, in the corridor, on Tapestry or during festivals and exhibitions.
- **Mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs:** HCH is a UNESCO ASPNet school and respect and tolerance are essential values for us. Children gain respect through positive and respectful interaction with adults who value their individual personalities. Discussions about different faiths, cultures and beliefs take place during lessons. We provide activities and games to encourage turn taking. Our festival 'Citizen of the World' celebrates all the cultures, nationalities, languages at HCH. During this festival, children have the opportunity to try foods from other cultures, discover art, music and dance from all around the world or learn a few words in other languages. Parents and carers are invited to participate and support. Parents are also welcome to come to the classroom to read stories about their cultures and faiths.

Outside the Classroom

- **Sport (from Nursery):** children's co-ordination and health are very important to us. The children develop these vital physical skills with two sessions each week, led by specialist sports teachers. For example the children show increasing control over a ball or beanbag by catching and kicking, throwing and pushing.
- **Forest School (from Pre-Nursery):** the children in Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Reception enjoy a weekly forest school session with a qualified forest school practitioner, in a safe woodland setting, in Bushy Park, or our own grounds. These classes help children develop confidence, team-working skills, problem-solving skills, independence and an increased attention span. The children experience hands-on learning outside, gently enhancing their stamina.
- **Facilities:** there are nice acres of grounds, sport fields, the Little Garden, a dedicated Early Years space for play and we have direct access to Bushy Park. The children spend a lot of time outdoors, discovering the natural world around them.

Finding out about how your child is progressing

Parents are informed regularly of their child's progress in the areas of Learning and Development (within the EYFS framework) through regular dialogue and access to their child's online development journal. There are two Parent/Teacher evenings, which take place in the Autumn and in the Spring Terms and at the end of the Summer Term, parents receive a written report and summary of attainment within the EYFS. It is important that parents and teachers work together, exchange information and discuss the needs and support to benefit the children. Parents have the opportunity to chat briefly to the form teacher in the morning and afternoon and can make an appointment to see their child's class teacher at a mutually convenient time if a longer meeting is needed.

How can parents support their child's Learning?

All the fun activities (games, story telling etc.) that parents do with their child at home are important in supporting their learning and development, and have a really long lasting effect on the child's learning as they progress through school. We encourage parents to make their children read every day.

Our approach in Daycare (3 months to 36 months)

Communication and language

Children are cared for in a rich language environment and have many opportunities to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves.

Physical development

With an Early Years dedicated Little Garden, our own park and playground, easy access to Bush Park and Hampton Court Palace gardens, the children are offered many opportunities to be active and to develop their co-ordination and movement.

Personal, social and emotional development

Children will learn to form positive relationships with others, children and adults, to manage their feelings and the feelings of others, and to grow with confidence and respect.

Literacy

Your child will be encouraged to look at books and listen to stories, poems and other materials to develop their curiosity and vocabulary.

Mathematics

The children develop their skills in understanding and using numbers, counting, understanding shapes and spaces.

Understanding the world

It is important that the children understand the world around them. They have many opportunities to observe, explore and ask questions. They regularly spend time in the Little Garden with Nursery and Reception children. They also start to spend some time in the Pre-Nursery class on the term before their entry to Pre-Nursery.

Expressive arts and design

Children are given a range of material to explore and they are encouraged to show their feelings through stories and painting, colouring, sculpting, messy play etc.

Two Year Progress Check

Between the age of two and three the key person will review the progress of the children, by completing the 'Two Year Progress Check'. They will write a small written summary in the prime areas and discuss with parents who will add their comments. This progress check will identify the child's strengths or potential concerns. The Daycare staff will develop a targeted plan to support children and will liaise when necessary with parents and professionals.

Our approach in Pre-Nursery (30-36 months) and Nursery (3 to 4 years old)

We deliver the curriculum through a variety of topics and activities (indoor and outdoor) selected carefully to stimulate and interest the children such as:

- imaginative play, dressing up, playing with dolls and small world equipment
- construction play, including bricks, Lego and construction kits
- role-play such as being mum or dad, a fire officer, a policeman, a builder, a doctor, etc.
- social play such as ring games, board games, parties, team games, circle time
- skilled play, puzzles, sorting activities, threading and model making
- cooking and messy play.

When planning, we also take into account children's individual interests and abilities.

Literacy

During circle time and English lessons, children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately. Children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer *how* and *why* questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events. Children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. Children are also encouraged to choose a book for quiet reading and discussion. In Pre-Nursery, children take home their class mascot and talk about their experience with them.

Children use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read. The children are introduced to a new letter each week. Children also use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways, which match their spoken sounds. We use phonic songs and actions, phonic sound books, sound games, a phonics table as a visual aid, flash cards and the children are encouraged to bring an item from home for the sound table. In Nursery, in addition to their individual reading sessions, children take two reading books home per week to read with their parents.

In writing, we work on letter formation and introduce some pencil control activities. We do a lot of fine motor skills activities like cutting or play dough.

Mathematics

Through games and singing and planned activities children count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing. Children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems. They recognise, create and describe patterns. They explore characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.

Social Skills

Children have the confidence to try new things and say why they like some activities more than others. They will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities and will say when they do or do not need help. They have the confidence to speak in a familiar group about their ideas. We talk about the consequences of how they and others show feelings and behave. They understand that some behaviour is unacceptable.

They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations and they take changes of routine in their stride. Children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity.

They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

Children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children do not always enjoy the same things and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions. They make observations of animals and plants, explain why some things occur and talk about changes.

Children recognise that a range of technologies are used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technologies for particular purposes.

Creativity

Children sing songs; make music, dance and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colours, design, texture, form and function. Children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design, technology, art and music.

Our approach in Reception (4 to 5 years old)

In Reception, the children continue to build relationships with the other children and adults around them through play, stories and discussions. They discover more about their own emotions and develop strategies to deal with conflicts and the importance of respect and kindness.

Literacy

We encourage children to talk, discuss, build and expand their vocabulary through books, themes, shows, board games, team work activities. The adults model good listening skills.

Reading is of great importance, with the children progressing through their phonic knowledge, blending to read simple words, on to simple story books towards becoming independent readers under the guidance of reading specialists. They continue to enjoy books being read to them, absorbing the rich vocabulary from a wide range of stories and developing their comprehension skills. The children learn about authors and illustrators, the structure of a book, from the front cover to the summary on the back. They discuss their expectations of what may come next in the story and how the characters feel as well as coming up with alternate endings. We start lessons with reviewing single letter sounds and vowel sounds to then extend to digraphs and trigraphs. We generally focus on one sound per lesson, linking it to handwriting. We use picture/letter matching activities, board games, video (EAL support for correct sound pronunciation and to help with blending). On top of their individual reading sessions, children explore a group of sight words each week as a class. We use flash cards, alpha-blocks, worksheets, picture/sound recognition, magnetic letters. The children also start writing words using phonic sounds, with adults encouraging them and supporting correct spelling.

The children begin to refine their gross motor skills through sport, swimming and gymnastics, as well as building up their finger strength and control for writing in cursive. They begin by learning how to write their name in cursive writing, practising individual letter formation and using their skills for independent writing tasks. We are using fine motor skills activities such as threading, peg work, play dough, cutting with scissors to strengthen finger muscles and use strategies and resources (e.g. ergonomic pencils) to support more efficient pencil hold.

They use their phonic knowledge to write labels, captions and simple sentences that match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words and begin to learn to spell high frequency words. Children initially start writing letters that are quite large to develop correct cursive formation before moving on to a smaller template once good letter formation is established. We focus on uniformity and correct positioning of letters on the line.

In spelling, we focus on high frequency and word families. We start with writing CVC words, using phonics knowledge then using digraphs and trigraphs and known sight words, encouraging independent writing through listening to the sounds in words and using phonics knowledge to write. Our goal is to develop confidence in writing as a partner to reading. By the Summer Term, our aim is to spell some non-phonetic high frequency words and to use cursive handwriting to copy and spell.

We continue to develop children's listening and attention skills, playing games such as 'Simon says' or mimic games with increasing complication and listening to clapping patterns. Nursery rhymes, songs and rhyming songs are regularly introduced and children listen to a wide range of books with different genres and themes including classical stories, myths, fables, fairy tales. Children are invited to share their favourite books and to take part in World Book Day. We encourage them to question events, understand different meanings, predict what might happen next and even change the ending of a story. We also help them to understand emotions through role play.

In creative writing, children have the opportunity to write postcards for the holiday, letters to family and friends, thank you cards, invitations, label and captions. They also learn to copy from the board (e.g. the date) and write their weekend and holiday news.

Our aim is to bring children's phonics knowledge, handwriting, understanding of story structure together by children who then will create, write and illustrate their own fairy tale.

Mathematics

In mathematics lessons the children learn to count to one hundred in ones, twos, fives and tens. Through practical activities, the children begin to understand concepts such as addition, subtraction and division. They explore 2D and 3D shapes and their properties and use measures such as weight and capacity for real life applications such as cooking.

The world around us

Children have enquiring minds and this leads to spontaneous activities. They enjoy observing the world around them, such as daily weather watching, noticing the changes in seasons and how this affects animals and plants. The children visit farms and aquariums to understand how different animals and plants live, using this knowledge for example to grow their own plants and care for newly hatched chicks. They enjoy carrying out simple experiments such as finding ways to speed up ice melting, or what seeds need to grow into strong plants. We remain flexible to plan for children's interests and develop their curiosity through playful exploration and encourage their confidence to problem solve and think critically.