



Putting families at the centre

Learning Policy

This policy was adopted by Honeycroft's Board of Trustees September 2022

This policy is due for review in October 2023

Guiding Principles

At Honeycroft we believe in the importance of learning through play and inclusion for all. We use play as the way to engage children the things that matter the most in the world around them to support their growth and development. In addition, our curriculum planning provides a chance for our children to explore their sense of place individually, locally and globally by offering activities and experiences which help to;

- a. develop knowledge of how we are all connected
- b. explore a sense of belonging and respect for differences and diversity
- c. start the early stages of acting responsibly for a more peaceful and sustainable world

We do this by;

- offering a learning environment with resources and activities to reflect and stimulate children's natural curiosity and imagination.
- building strong bonds with the children and modelling respect for others, kindness and compassion to the children and reward their positive behaviour.
- Building positive partnerships with parents/carers to work together to make sure their child is happy, secure and confident.

In practise

- All children are entitled to high quality learning and teaching. This will equip them with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need today, and prepare them well for tomorrow.
- Children learn at different rates and each child's development is unique.
- Children learn best when they are happy, secure and actively involved in their own learning. We discuss children's learning with them. We make children's enjoyment and choices our priority.
- Effective teaching and learning in the EYFS meets children's identified needs and interests and helps children to learn and develop in all seven areas of learning and development.
- Different aspects of early learning require different approaches. Much of early maths learning is sequential: learning new concepts must on the solid foundations of earlier

concepts. On the other hand, learning about the world is much less sequential. The order of learning matters less than building on children's interests and widening their horizons. We are open. We regularly discuss and review our work with each other, and with parents. Discussion and review help us to ensure that children take part in learning with joy and enthusiasm. It helps us to ensure that their learning in nursery prepares them well for reception, so that they can confidently handle a transition and continue their learning journey.

- Curriculum development is practitioner development: what we do, and how we do it, matter equally.
- Every child can progress well in their learning, with the right support. Every child can thrive.

Learning at Honeycroft

- Most learning is play-based and takes place indoors and outside.
- There is a balance between adult-initiated experiences (guided learning) and child-initiated experiences.
- Adults take children's interests and strengths as a starting point, seeing each child as a competent learner.
- Parents involvement is crucial. We learn a great deal about each child from their parents. Parental support and a high quality home learning environment make a huge difference to children.

Our intention is to design a curriculum with the particular strengths and needs of the children in mind. For example, many children are multilingual: we celebrate the different languages children speak, and with multilingual staff team we use a range of languages when interacting with children.

We plan our weekly adult-led activities with children in mind, following their interest whilst providing an overview of many of the different things we would like children to know and be able to do. We understand the essential role of play in child's development. It is through child-led play, adult led activities, routine (e.g. group time, meal times), trips and visits from invited guests, that children develop confidence and relationships with others. Through play, our early years team help to extend children's vocabulary and develop their communication skills, which is fundamental for all other areas of development to emerge.

Planning and assessment

Every child has allocated key person. In the first term of children attending our setting, key people spend quality time getting to know their key children and their families. This trusting relationship helps children to settle into nursery and grow in confidence in their new environment. Good and effective planning is fundamental to children making high level of progress and incorporating learning through play is key.

There are three formal assessments that take place during children's time at Honeycroft, in relation with the EYFS:

- 1) **Two-Year Progress Check** (this will happen between the ages of 24 to 36 months)
- 2) **Nursery Baseline Assessment** (4-6 weeks from your child's starting date)
- 3) **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile** (in the form of regular observations on children's individual learning journals):
 - a. **Focus child** – your child's key worker will observe and assess your child in their chosen week, adding in depth observations on tapestry, with clear next steps. All observations will be linked to all 7 areas of learning as well as to the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning.
 - b. **Personal Profile** – at the end of each term your child's keyworker will complete 'Personal profile' for your child, capturing the uniqueness of your child, highlighting their strengths and areas for development

Our curriculum consists

Long Term Plan – the aim of our Long Term Plan is to enable each and every person (adult and child) to find and fulfil their potential. It is set of goals for each of the stakeholders (children, parents, staff, community) which Honeycroft aims to support throughout the academic year in relation with 3Rs: Resilience, Relationship and Creativity.

Medium Term Plan - we see our Medium Term Plan as essential for organising different aspects of the curriculum, such as topics which show what staff are planning to teach over a period of weeks. This is done half termly with children's current needs and interests in mind, covering all areas of learning within the EYFS.

Short Term Plan - this is our weekly planning which brings together a collection of children's individual observations, group observations, children's interest and parents contributions. Having all this information enables our practitioners to identify and plan activities, experiences, and children's next steps for the following week.

Assessment and tracking overview

At Honeycroft, we proactively seek out ways to promote children's physical, mental and emotional wellbeing e.g. as part of our ongoing observation, assessment and planning cycle we monitor children's wellbeing, by drawing on tools such as the Leuven scales of wellbeing and involvement.

Assessment serves children's learning and our curriculum. Most assessment is formative, so that it quickly helps us to make a difference to children's learning. However, we also need to have an overview of children's progress, so that we can take further actions where needed. Honeycroft ensures that all children attending the setting has a personal Learning Journey

which records photos, observations and comments, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage, to build up a record of each child's achievements during their time with us. It will also show children's developmental progress through the 7 areas of the EYFS.

Our objectives:

- 1) Dialogue with parents, so that we can work in a respectful partnership to support children's learning at home and in the nursery
- 2) Dialogue with children, focused on how they learn, to promote metacognitive thinking
- 3) Early identification of children who need temporary extra help, and children who may have special educational needs
- 4) Checking that individual children, and groups of children, are making progress and taking prompt action where this is not the case
- 5) Reporting formally to parents highlighting strengths and areas of development so that children can continue their learning journey through the EYFS as seamlessly as possible.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

For children with SEND, precise assessment needs to focus on what the child can do, and what the barriers to their learning are. If a child has specific difficulties with their communication, for example, they may need to have aids like a core vocabulary board so that they can make choices and share their ideas. All children are entitled to the whole of the early years curriculum. Of course, they won't all manage to do and know everything that's mapped out: but some who appear vulnerable at first may thrive later in the year. Rather than 'differentiating down', we believe that 'scaffolding up' is a more suitable approach in our commitment to inclusion. By 'scaffolding up', children with SEND are exposed to the concepts and skills in our wider curriculum in a suitable breadth and depth. Whereas 'differentiating down' suggests that children with SEND have limited access to the curriculum. Our commitment to 'scaffolding up' means that children are included in the wider curriculum and are not segregated from their peers.

Partnership with others including the Community

- We recognise the vital importance of a smooth transition from home to the Centre and consequently through any of the services and onto school
- We work in partnership with other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Social Workers, BHISS, Educational Psychologists to support the child's learning and development and their family to ensure continuity at home.
- We are part of the local community which supports and networks with all.

APPENDIX

Honeycroft Values and Behaviours

Equity & Justice Fairness in access, opportunity, experience & outcome	Inclusion Belonging & feeling relevant and involved	Voice Representation, participation & the power to affect decisions	Respect Enabling & protecting personal, community & cultural dignity	Wellbeing Improving physical, mental & emotional wellbeing
takes personal ownership of all you do	builds strong relationships with others	finds ways to connect with others	gives others the benefit of the doubt and doesn't assume the worse	helps create moments of shared laughter, song and dance
asks for help when needed rather than when it's a problem	keeps an open mind and thinks creatively about problems	stands up for others and speaks up	builds on other's ideas & suggestions	shows positive energy under pressure
communicates openly & activity listens	is enthusiastic about change and different ways of working	finds ways to try new things ad stretch self	finds ways to show you appreciate others	makes everyday tasks fun
coaches others and shares expertise	encourages discussion of difference	offers small acts of daily greatness	respects individual and cultural differences	recognises the importance of your behaviour on those around you