Learning in Harmony Trust

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That all children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a secure foundation for learning, development and good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported
- A safe, secure and stimulating environment, which promotes children's welfare and safeguards all pupils
- Children are supported to become confident, independent learners.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers, dated 13 July 2026 and effective from 1 September 2026.

We ensure we comply with the current Keeping Children safe in education guidance, Working together to safeguard children, Prevent duty guidance, the SEND code of practice and the statutory Early years qualification requirements and standards. We also have regard to the DfE EYFS nutrition guidance and Screen use guidance.

3. Structure of the EYFS

At Hartley, we offer Early Years provision from the term following a child's third birthday. Our Nursery provides flexible provision of either 15 or 30 hours per week, depending on parental preference and eligibility. Parents wishing to access 30 hours of funded childcare are required to provide a valid eligibility code.

Our 15-hour Nursery provision is offered through two session options: morning sessions from 8:30am to 11:30am and afternoon sessions from 12:30pm to 3:30pm.

Our Nursery and Reception classes share a dedicated outdoor learning environment, providing opportunities for children to engage in purposeful outdoor learning, develop independence and build relationships across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Where we deliver funded nursery places, we comply with our local authority provider agreement and the funding arrangements informed by the DfE Early education and childcare guidance effective from 1 April 2026. Entitlement hours are accessible free of charge. We do not require parents to buy additional hours, meals, consumables or optional activities to access a funded place, or impose top-up fees or additional SEND support charges for entitlement hours.

We publish clear information about funded sessions, optional extras and charges. Families can decline optional extras and are offered reasonable alternatives, such as supplying their own items or having charges waived. Children retain access to appropriate EYFS provision.

4. Learning

We deliver all seven areas of learning as outlined in the EYFS statutory framework. The prime areas are communication and language; personal, social and emotional development; and physical development. The specific areas are literacy; mathematics; understanding the world; and expressive arts and design. All areas are important and connected.

Our curriculum builds vocabulary, conversation and listening through high-quality adult–child interactions, stories, songs and rhymes. It develops relationships, emotional understanding, self-regulation, independence and healthy habits. Children develop gross and fine motor skills through active play and carefully planned opportunities indoors and outdoors.

We foster enjoyment of books, language comprehension and early reading and writing, including systematic phonics in Reception. Mathematics develops number understanding, counting, patterns, spatial reasoning and positive attitudes. First-hand experiences, visits, books and discussion help children understand people, communities and the natural world. Children explore materials, music, imaginative play and artistic expression.

Teaching combines child-initiated play, adult modelling and guided learning, with direct teaching where appropriate. Staff consider the characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.

Staff plan from what children already know and can do, identify intended learning and adapt support. For younger children, the prime areas are central. Concerns about a prime area are discussed with families and relevant professionals; support is not delayed until a formal diagnosis. The early learning goals are assessment endpoints and do not define or limit the curriculum.

5. Assessment

At Hartley, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Staff observe pupils to identify their progress, development and interests. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the reception baseline assessment (RBA). The requirements for the RBA are set out in Annex B of EYFS statutory framework.

In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age 5, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child (before 30 June in that term). Each child is assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’)

We share the EYFS profile with the child’s year 1 teacher. This helps to inform a discussion between reception and year 1 teachers about the child’s stage of development and learning needs, and helps with planning activities in year 1.

The school shares the results of each child’s EYFS profile (but not the reception baseline assessment) with their parents and/or carers.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other Trust schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. We submit EYFS profile data to the local authority on request.

6. Inclusion

We are committed to inclusion for all children. Every child is entitled to access a broad, balanced and ambitious Early Years curriculum, regardless of background, ability or need.

High-quality, quality-first teaching underpins all provision. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are supported through appropriate adaptations to enable them to access learning and make progress. This includes children who are more able, as well as those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Where additional support is required, Individual Support Plans (ISPs) or equivalent provision plans are used to identify and monitor targets in specific areas of learning, in line with the school's SEND Policy.

Early identification of need, close collaboration with parents and relevant staff, and regular review of progress help to reduce barriers to learning. The inclusive approach promotes confidence, wellbeing and a strong sense of belonging for all children.

For children whose home language is not English, we provide opportunities to develop and use that language in play and learning and support English language development. When assessing apparent delay, staff explore skills in the home language with parents rather than assuming limited English indicates SEND.

7. Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop most effectively when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. We value the important role that families play in their child's learning and development and are committed to maintaining open and effective communication.

Throughout the academic year, parents and/or carers are invited to attend two parents' evenings and receive a written report outlining their child's progress and achievements.

We ensure that parents and/or carers are kept informed about their child's learning, progress and development. Ongoing assessments and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Profile provide a comprehensive picture of each child's knowledge, understanding and skills, including their strengths and areas for further development.

Parents and/or carers are also encouraged to engage with Tapestry, our online learning journal, to celebrate their child's learning experiences and contribute observations and achievements from home. This helps to strengthen the partnership between home and school and supports a shared understanding of each child's development.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to make sure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

We require parents and/or carers to provide at least two emergency contact numbers for their child and ensure that all contact and collection arrangements recorded on Arbor are accurate and kept up to date. To safeguard children, pupils will only be released into the care of individuals who have been authorised by their parents and/or carers. If an individual who is not listed as an authorised collector on Arbor arrives to collect a child, staff must contact the child's parent/carer using the contact details held by the school to verify their identity and obtain explicit authorisation.

8. Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff, we will follow the procedures set out in the latest EYFS framework guidance on checking the suitability of new recruits, including:

- Obtaining a reference for any member of staff (including students and volunteers) before they are recruited
- Recording information about staff qualifications and identity checks, vetting processes and references

In addition, in the early years, where schools are also subject to the EYFS framework, volunteers will not be permitted to begin working until the school has received the volunteer's enhanced DBS certificate including barred list information (where the volunteer is in regulated activity).

See our safeguarding, safer recruitment and volunteer policies for details of our safer recruitment procedures.

9. Whistleblowing

We make sure that all staff, students and volunteers are aware of our whistleblowing procedures; feel able to raise concerns about any poor or unsafe practice; and know that such concerns will be taken seriously and staff are supported to report them.

In the event that a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of a member of staff or volunteer, they should report their concern to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the CEO.

See our whistleblowing policy for more detail on our procedures for handling whistleblowing.

If staff cannot raise a concern internally or believe it is not being addressed, they can use the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk, or contact Ofsted. These routes do not replace immediate referrals needed to protect a child.

10. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure; when their individual needs are met; and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory EYFS Framework to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

All safeguarding concerns are reported to the DSL through our safeguarding management information system, CPOMS.

If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we will immediately notify our local authority children's social care team, in line with local reporting procedures. In emergencies, we may also inform the police.

We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has lead responsibility for safeguarding children. They are also responsible for:

- Liaising with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSPs (local safeguarding partners)
- Providing support, advice and guidance to all other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required

- Attending a safeguarding training course that complies with the criteria set out in Annex C of the latest EYFS framework

All staff are alert to any issues of concern in children's lives at home or elsewhere.

All staff will:

- Train all staff in safeguarding procedures in line with Annex C of the most recent EYFS framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance
- Support all staff to feel supported and confident in implementing our safeguarding policy and procedures
- Refresh training annually, or more often when it's needed to help maintain skills, keep up to date with any changes to our safeguarding procedures or because of any safeguarding concerns

See our safeguarding policy for more information.

11. Responding to allegations

All allegations against staff will be handled by the Head Teacher in line with the Trust's Allegations Against Staff policy. If an allegation is against the Head Teacher, this will be handled by the CEO, or a senior officer delegated by the CEO.

If any allegation is made of serious harm or abuse by anyone working or looking after children at the school or elsewhere, e.g. on a visit, we will inform Ofsted within 14 days of the allegation being made. We will also inform them of any action we have taken in response to the allegation(s).

12. Staffing ratios

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff: child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety:

- For children aged 2, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 5 children
- For children aged 3 and over:
    - Where there is a person with qualified teacher status, early years professional status, or early years teacher status, an instructor or another suitably-qualified, overseas-trained teacher:
        - For classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5 or older within the school year, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 30 children
        - For all other classes, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
        - At least 1 other member of staff holds an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status
    - Where a person with the above qualifications is not working directly with the children, we have at least 1 member of staff for every 8 children
        - At least 1 member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification, or has received approval to be included in the ratios at level 3 after attaining experience-based route status

- At least half of all other staff hold an approved level 2 qualification

For reception classes in maintained schools and academies:

- We comply with infant class size legislation and have at least 1 teacher per 30 pupils

13. Staff supervision

We will ensure that all staff who have contact with children and families receive regular, effective supervision. Supervision will provide support, coaching and training, promote children's welfare, and foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement, including opportunities for confidential discussion of sensitive matters.

Supervision arrangements will enable staff to discuss children's development and wellbeing (including safeguarding concerns), identify solutions to emerging issues, and receive guidance to enhance their professional practice and personal effectiveness.

14. Paediatric first aid (PFA)

At least one person with a current full PFA certificate meeting Annex A is on site and available whenever children are present, and accompanies children on outings. This applies to Reception as well as nursery provision. Training is renewed every three years. We assess staffing and premises so help can reach children quickly and cover continues during breaks and absence. Full PFA training is at least 12 hours and includes practical assessment; a general first aid certificate alone does not fulfil this requirement.

Staff gaining level 2 or level 3 qualifications since 30 June 2016 obtain full or emergency PFA within three months of starting work to count in the relevant qualified ratios, subject to the framework's disability exception. Experience-based route staff obtain PFA before counting at level 3.

15. Attendance

We expect children to attend school every day when they are well enough to do so and we will follow up on all absences promptly.

We follow up unexplained absence promptly and contact parents and alternative emergency contacts when absence is unexplained or prolonged. Staff consider patterns, the child's and family's vulnerabilities and home circumstances. Welfare concerns are escalated immediately to the DSL.

See our attendance policy for more on this, including our expectations of parents/carers to report child absences.

16. Safer eating

Meals, snacks and drinks are healthy, balanced and nutritious, and fresh drinking water is always accessible. We have regard to the DfE EYFS nutrition guidance. Food preparation facilities are hygienic and suitably equipped, including sterilisation equipment where needed. Everyone preparing or handling food receives food hygiene training appropriate to their role.

We follow the Learning In Harmony Trust Allergy Safety policy, which is published on our website and implemented through the completed Local Management Plan (See Appendix 2 of the policy). The named senior Allergy Lead is Zuzanna Gromska. Staff recognise and know how to respond to allergy and anaphylaxis symptoms, understand allergies and intolerances, and know new allergies may develop at any time.

At every meal and snack, responsibility for checking each child's food and drink is clear. Checks include food brought from home and address allergens, medical needs and choking risks. Where an item is unsafe, staff prevent its consumption, provide a suitable alternative where possible and discuss it with parents.

Our setting ensures a member of staff with a current full-course PFA certificate is in the room whenever children eat, reflecting the EYFS safer eating guidance. Children are always within sight and hearing of staff, safely seated suitably.. Staff actively supervise, ideally facing children, prevent food sharing and remain alert because choking can be silent.

Food is prepared to prevent choking and meet each child's developmental and medical needs. We follow DfE food safety advice and discuss solid foods, textures and progression with parents rather than making assumptions based on age.

Choking incidents requiring intervention are recorded, parents are informed, and leaders review patterns and act to reduce risk. Registered providers notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable and within 14 days of food poisoning affecting two or more children cared for on the premises; public health advice is sought promptly.

17. Accidents or injuries

An appropriately stocked children's first aid box is always accessible. We keep written online records of accidents, injuries and first aid treatment and inform parents on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable afterwards.

We will inform parents or carers the same day as, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, of any:

- Accident or injury sustained by the child
- First aid treatment given

We will notify the relevant authority (HSE, LADO, MASH and/or Ofsted for EY centres) of any serious accident, illness, or injury to, or death of any child while in our care and inform them of the action taken, as soon as reasonably practicable and within 14 days of the event, in line with mandatory timeframes.

18. Safety of premises

We make sure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor space, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children we care for and the activities provided on the premises.

We carry out daily risk assessments of indoor and outdoor environments to ensure they are safe and free from hazards.

We comply with requirements of health and safety legislation, including fire safety and hygiene requirements.

19. Toileting and privacy

We make sure that there are:

- Enough toilets and hand basins available for the children
- Suitable and hygienic nappy changing facilities
- Separate toilet facilities for adults

During nappy/pull up changes and toileting, we will balance children's privacy with their safeguarding and support needs.

See our Intimate Care policy for further information.

20. Behaviour Management

Our EYFS classes follow our whole school behaviour policy, which can be found on our website.

We promote positive behaviour by:

- Establishing clear routines and expectations.
- Teaching children to understand and regulate emotions.
- Using restorative approaches where appropriate.
- Working closely with families where additional support is needed.

21. Missing child procedures

The procedures we will follow if a child goes missing, either from the school site or while on a school trip, can be found in our Missing Child Procedures on our website.

22. Children's screen use

We have regard to DfE Help for early years providers Screen use guidance. Screens are used cautiously, briefly and intentionally for a clear learning or developmental purpose with adult co-engagement. They do not replace direct interaction, play, physical activity, sleep, stories or outdoor experiences, and are not used as background entertainment or routinely to occupy children, manage behaviour or calm them.

We avoid screen time for under-twos except exceptional circumstances such as a supported video call with parents. For ages two to five, the guidance recommends a maximum of one hour a day across home and settings, less where possible; this is not an entitlement to one hour in our provision. We work with families to minimise total exposure.

Content is checked in advance for suitability, pace and safety and is free from advertisements, scrolling and autoplay. Children do not use screens without adult co-engagement. We avoid children using AI, including AI-enabled toys, in line with the guidance. Assistive screen-based technology for SEND is considered individually and is not subject to the ordinary screen time limits; safeguards remain in place. Statutory RBA administration follows the specific assessment guidance.

Online Safety and Hartley / LiHT ICT AUP - Parents and Carers - 2026

23. Complaints

Our Complaints policy is available here and on our website, and explains how to raise concerns and escalate them

24. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to be compliant with the EYFS Statutory Framework.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This isn't an exhaustive list of policies and only includes policies specific to the EYFS. For a full list of our policies, see here.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Attendance policy
Administering medicines policy	See Managing medicines in schools policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See 'Fire Drill and Emergency Evacuation of the School Building' and 'School Lockdown Procedures'
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent/carer failing to collect a child	See safeguarding policy
Missing Child Procedures	See missing child procedures
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy
Allegations Against Staff Policy	See Allegations Against Staff Policy
Procedures for managing pupil behaviour	See Behaviour Management Policy