

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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Responsibility

Respect

Resilience

Kindness

Honesty

Cooperation



Contents

1 Introduction	3
2 Principles guiding our EYFS provision	4
3 Our EYFS curriculum	5
4 Assessment in EYFS.....	7
5 Admissions and induction.....	7
6 Planning an effective transition	8
7 Inclusion.....	8
8 Children’s health and well-being at school.....	8
9 Roles and responsibilities	9
10 Parents as partners.....	9



1 Introduction

Our aim at Heronsgate Primary school is to help all of our pupils achieve their full potential based on the following core values:



Responsibility

Our children take responsibility for themselves, their learning and their actions so that they make the most out of every opportunity.



Respect

Our children show respect for themselves by recognising that they are unique and valuable. They respect all members of our community, our country and our world.



Resilience

Our children love learning and take a positive approach to challenges that help them develop their understanding. They build confidence to learn from their mistakes and move forward.



Kindness

Our children show kindness through caring, sharing and thinking about others. They reflect on how their actions can help and support others in our community and in our world.



Honesty

Our children are honest by being truthful when sharing their views and their feelings. They act truthfully when learning with others.



Cooperation

Our children develop excellent cooperation skills. They enjoy learning together and value the views that others bring to a task.

And links to the following articles from the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child.



Article 13 Children have a right to find things out;

Article 28 Children have a right to a good quality education;

Article 29 Education should develop children's talents;

We create a safe and happy environment with challenging and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential. This policy explains how we ensure that children make the best possible start on their learning journey.



2 Principles guiding our EYFS provision

Our Early Years provision is based on the following four guiding principles:

A Unique Child	Every child is a 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.
Learning and Development	Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. We cater for the needs and developmental stages of each individual child.

These principles guide our curriculum planning.

Our children engage with activities that are designed from the following groups:

1. **Playing and exploring** - children investigate, experience, and 'have a go'.
2. **Active learning** - children concentrate and persevere if they encounter difficulties. They enjoy learning and celebrate their achievements.
3. **Creating and thinking critically** - children develop and act upon their own ideas; they make links between concepts and develop strategies for solving problems.



3 Our EYFS curriculum

Planning the Curriculum

The Early Foundation Stage curriculum is made up of seven Areas of Learning; three Prime and four Specific Areas.

These Areas are then sub-divided into seventeen Aspects:

Area of development	Aspect of Learning
Prime Areas	
Communication and Language	1. Listening, attention and understanding 2. Speaking
Personal, Social and Emotional Development,	3. Self-regulation 4. Managing self 5. Building relationships
Physical Development	6. Gross Motor Skills 7. Fine Motor Skills
Specific Areas	
Literacy	8. Comprehension 9. Word reading 10. Writing
Mathematics	11. Number 12. Numerical patterns
Understanding the World	13. Past and Present 14. People, Culture and Communities 15. The Natural World
Expressive Arts and Design	16. Creating with materials 17. Being imaginative and expressive

We place the skills and knowledge at the centre of our curriculum planning. This enables us to be guided by the children’s interests, individual needs and learning styles, whilst ensuring that we deliver all areas of the curriculum. Our curriculum also reflects our commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities through a provision which reflects our diverse and multi-cultural society.

Democracy and values

We develop each child’s personal, social and emotional well-being, as well as their respect and understanding of their own and others’ cultures, beliefs and religions. We do this through:

- involving pupils in the annual outline of the school charters for behaviour
- encouraging discussions and justification of their own feelings and ideas as well as an acceptance of other people expressing a different view or emotions.
- helping pupils to make decisions that are acceptable to the school community and society at large
- exploring, engaging and celebrating their own and other’s faiths, festivals and cultural traditions
- encouraging healthy self-esteem
- encouraging enquiring minds
- helping pupils to value physical well-being, privacy, feelings, beliefs and the rights of others
- encouraging pupils to explore their feelings and reactions to different stimuli



The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up into learning areas and children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The EYFS classrooms share a large indoor and outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's personal and social development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. Whatever is learnt indoors can be transferred and enhanced outdoors.

Play

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

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Active Learning

Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

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. Well timed and accurate adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.

Children should be given opportunity to be creative and encouraged to think critically through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Forest School

We offer Forest School sessions in our school. The Forest School ethos is focused on helping to develop personal, social and emotional skills and raising self-esteem. Children learn how to cooperate and work with others to solve problems and how to use their own initiative. They will have the opportunity to make their own assessments of risk by rehearsing the safety rules and following the routines that are built up over a series of sessions.



4 Assessment in EYFS

The Cycle of Observation, Planning and Assessment

We hold the individual child at the centre of our planning and we strive to listen to the voice of the child.

“Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously” (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).

This is achieved through detailed observations and assessment. Evidence is gathered by:

- observing children as they act and interact in their play within; everyday activities, child-initiated activities and planned adult-led activities
- learning from parents/carers about what their child enjoys experiencing at home
- considering the examples of development as stated in the unique theme: observing what children can do, and identifying the stage on their developmental pathway
- considering ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development
- considering the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, teachers complete the EYFS profile for each child. The profile provides parents, practitioners and teachers with a clear picture of a child's development, knowledge, understanding and abilities in terms of their progress towards the Early Learning Goals, as well as whether they have achieved a Good Level of Development. In addition, it gives information to Year 1 teachers so that they can prepare for individual children's readiness, needs and next steps during the transition period from reception to Year 1.

The profile will reflect upon the schools on-going observation and relevant records.

The teacher will determine whether the child is meeting the **expected** levels or **emerging** towards the expected levels of development against each of the 17 early learning goals.

5 Admissions and induction

Starting the learning journey is a big step in any child's life and our school provides a calm environment where children feel secure, settled and confident where their skills and talents are developed to the full.

Our nursery offers part-time places (either five mornings or five afternoons) for children who are eligible for 15 hours childcare. Full-time Early Years education is in place for children in the Reception year which is statutory the term after the child turns five years old.

Nursery places are offered to children after they have had their third birthday. All admissions for a nursery place are offered through the School Office. We cannot guarantee a morning or afternoon space and we allocate these using a range of factors including the needs of the child, family circumstances and the morning/afternoon class groups. Further information about admissions to Nursery can be found in our Nursery Admission Policy.



6 Planning an effective transition

The following actions allow us to ensure that our children make a strong start to our school:

- Before starting, parents receive information about our school.
- Staff Visits are made to previous settings (e.g. nurseries/preschools) to obtain key information on each child.
- Parents are invited into school to meet with senior leaders during the Summer Term.
- School information packs will be distributed to parents at a welcome meeting (held in the Summer term). This pack explains school routines and expectations.
- Home visits are made to all families before a child starts school.
- For reception: staggered starts are offered comprising of half days, half days with lunch before starting full days.
- For nursery: parents are strongly encouraged to stay with their child until they feel relaxed enough to say goodbye (can take a various amount of time from two days up to two weeks). The child's teacher/key worker will advise parents on the best way to go about slowly encouraging their child to say goodbye.

7 Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals, children and family members, within our school.

We plan activities that allow our children to succeed by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

8 Children's health and well-being at school

It is important to us that all our children in our school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

For further information, see our school's safeguarding policy.



9 Roles and responsibilities

Governors

Governors receive termly reports from the EYFS team and they visit school regularly to monitor the work of our school. They judge this against this policy, national expectations and consider the views of parents/carers.

Senior Leadership team

The Lead EYFS teacher is responsible for the day-to-day leadership of the EYFS and supported by the Assistant Head (EYFS) and Heads of School.

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for the achievement of the children in their class. They will also be the first point of contact for parents/carers.

Class teachers are supported by a team of support staff including HLTAs, Early Years Practitioners and Teaching Assistants.

10 Parents as partners

We understand that children flourish best when home and school work together to provide the best possible learning experiences. As children and their families commence their journey at our school, we begin to develop and nurture strong positive attitudes where children become proud and respectful of themselves, others and their environment.

We pride ourselves on our friendly, open-door ethos where practitioners are always available to talk to parents. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss any concerns or feedback they might have.

We maintain effective two-way dialogues with parents about their child's achievements and next steps through a variety of means:

- on entry settling morning(s)
- on entry, parents are asked to share knowledge about their child that may help settle them
- Nursery/Reception newsletters which inform parents/carers about weekly learning and suggested 'family learning' activities.
- two parent consultation meetings regarding their child's progress and targets
- parents are given the opportunity to share home and school learning via our online learning journals
- reading/coffee mornings
- a series of parental engagement activities where parents are invited into school to learn with their child