



**Heathfield**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

# **Early Years Foundation Stage** **Policy**

Created in: ...May 2022.....

Review date : May 2024

Approved by: Academy Committee - May 2022

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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## Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DFE, 2021)

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Heathfield School, we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development; however, we also believe early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

At Heathfield our practice reflects the guidance set out in the ‘Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five’ document (DFE, 2021).

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. Some children entering Reception will have attended Heathfield Nursery. It is the privilege of the staff in Nursery and Reception to take on the task of building upon the children’s previous experiences. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/carers, and all staff work effectively together to support children’s learning and development.

## Overarching Principles

The four guiding principles shape the practice in our EYFS department. These are:

- Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and or/carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

## Vision

For children to be confident communicators who can articulate their needs, thoughts and opinions in a socially considerate manner. For children to be sociable individuals who can build positive relationships, showing they understand the need for empathy and kindness towards others. For children to demonstrate independence in self-care, decision making and in leading their own learning.

## Curriculum intent

Our EYFS curriculum will provide opportunities for learning at every moment of the school day. Through purposeful play, conversations and interactions, children will build knowledge and skills to prepare them for the National Curriculum and beyond.

We will provide a knowledge-rich and creative curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. We value the uniqueness of each child and recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our philosophy promotes resilience; children are equally challenged and supported to develop a positive approach to taking risks and making mistakes. Our stimulating and inviting environment enables children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experiences across all areas of the EYFS curriculum.

## Curriculum drivers

The 3 drivers that shape our EYFS curriculum are:

- Communication
- Socialisation
- Independence

These drivers ensure our EYFS curriculum prepares children for our KS1 and KS2 curriculum, where the drivers transition to knowledge, diversity and communication.

**We aim to:**

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, and caring environment which is sensitive to the needs of each child, including children with additional needs
- Provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development, both indoors and outdoors
- Use and value what each child can do, assess their individual needs and help each child to progress and achieve their full potential
- Build on children's knowledge and skills through both explicit teaching and purposeful adult interaction. *'[Children] need adults to 'scaffold' their learning by giving them just enough help to achieve something they could not do independently.'* (Development Matters, 2021)
- Enable choice, decision-making and problem solving, fostering independence and self-confidence
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and value their contributions
- Ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development

## Learning and Development

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise of:

- The seven areas of learning and development
- The 17 early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year
- The assessment requirements

The Statutory EYFS Framework consists of seven areas of learning and development. These are split into prime and specific areas.

The three **prime** areas of learning and development are:

### Communication and Language

#### Physical development

#### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The four **specific** areas of learning and development are:

#### Literacy

#### Mathematics

#### Understanding the World

#### Expressive Arts and Design

## Staffing and Organisation

We offer both funded 15-hour part time places and 30-hour full time places. Full time places, in the first instance, are offered to children of parents who meet the working parents 30 hours funded childcare criteria. If there are additional places available, we offer parents the option to fund the additional hours themselves.

In Nursery, there is 1 full time Nursery Lead (level 6 qualified) and 1 teaching assistant, both fulfilling roles as family group leaders. Children belong to a family group with an assigned key person.

In Reception, there are two classes that share one learning environment. There are 2 teachers and 2 teaching assistants, all fulfilling roles as family group leaders. Children belong to one of the four family groups with an assigned key person.

All staff have the appropriate qualifications to meet statutory requirements. We are always aiming to improve our teaching, skills, knowledge and understanding through training opportunities which comprise of regular PLD sessions, in class support from senior leaders, observations of colleagues, professional dialogue, and attendance at both our trust and Birmingham network meetings.

## Planning

Planning builds on and extends what children already know and can do. Our planning puts the principles of the EYFS into practice and is always informed by practitioners' observations in order to understand and consider children's interests and next steps in learning. All EYFS staff are committed to working together and are involved in this process.

Practitioners in both Nursery and Reception plan using our EYFS skills and knowledge curriculum. EYFS staff also consider individual and cohort needs and interests, and the stage of development of each child and use this

information - alongside the skills and knowledge curriculum - to plan challenging and engaging learning experiences for all.

'Helping children to think, discuss and plan ahead is important.' (DM 2021)

## Learning through play

*"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults."* (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DFE, 2017).

Play underpins the delivery of our EYFS curriculum. Through play, children will develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. It gives children the opportunity to take risks and make mistakes.

## Assessment, recording and monitoring

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and FGLs to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and to plan future activities. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning. This enables us to plan their next steps. All staff who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

### Formative assessment

This form of assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Family Group Leaders observe children to understand their stage of development, interests and learning styles, and then shape future learning experiences for each child.

Each child has an individual learning journal that evidences a snapshot of their learning. Parents and/or carers are kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development through daily contact with Family Groups Leaders, access to learning journeys and termly parent meetings. Family Group Leaders address any learning and development concerns in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

### Summative assessment

Children complete the Reception Baseline Assessment within the first 6 weeks of starting the Reception year. Practitioners in both Nursery and Reception assess whether children are 'on track' to meet the age related expectations towards the end of the autumn term and the spring term. Nursery practitioners assess whether children have met the expectations for 3&4 year olds for each area of learning towards the end of the summer term.

Reception practitioners assess whether children have met the goal for each area of learning towards the end of the summer term. The EYFS Profile is submitted, detailing achievement within the three prime areas and literacy and mathematics for each child at the end of the Reception year. Parents are informed whether their child has achieved a 'good level of development' (GLD) by the end of the Reception year.

### Moderation

At each assessment period, moderation takes place in school, led by senior leaders. Final EYFS assessment judgements are moderated at the end of Reception year both at school level and MAT level.

### Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out on a regular basis. This includes observations of teaching and learning, questioning and dialogue, learning walks and learning journal scrutiny. Monitoring is carried out by the Senior Leadership Team.

## The Learning Environment

We aim to create a purposeful, stimulating and challenging learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. Provocations and learning opportunities are planned and set up both indoors and outdoors.

We aim to make the learning environment in Nursery and Reception a place where children feel secure, confident and challenged and develop communication, socialisation and independence.

## Transition

We support children to transition smoothly to the next stage of their education.

The aim is for all staff involved in transitioning children to have:

- A shared understanding of what the principles of the EYFS look like in effective practice

- Understand and value the EYFS
- Promote best practice for transition by considering the transition experience of the children and effectively transfer information, including the EYFSP and characteristics of effective learning

## **Working in partnership with Parents and/ or Carers**

We recognise that parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. We provide opportunities for parents/carers and staff to work together in early years settings. Our successful partnerships consist of a two-way flow of information and knowledge. We aim to achieve this by:

- Undertaking home visits/transition meetings for all new children
- Holding a transition morning for new children and their parent/carer before they start school
- Providing termly parent workshops to provide parents with a chance to support their child within school and at home
- Holding termly parent meetings to discuss progress, celebrate success and sharing individual targets
- Providing an information booklet for new parents
- Providing a half-termly year group overview informing parents/carers of the learning taking place
- Providing an annual written report to parents
- Sharing electronic learning journeys that detail children's learning and provide opportunities for parents to contribute and comment.

## **Equal Opportunities**

At Heathfield, we aim to provide all pupils - regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability - equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Staff, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual targets in specific areas of learning, for those children who require additional support, will be set in line with the school's Inclusion Policy.

The school's Inclusion Lead Practitioner is responsible for providing additional information and advice to key workers and parents/carers, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. For further information see the school's Inclusion Policy.

## **Safeguarding and Welfare requirements**

At Heathfield School we take the necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We follow the EYFS Statutory Framework legal requirements. We also follow the Child Protection/Safeguarding policy of the school/MAT.

The DSLs are displayed around school and staff are fully trained and aware of procedures in this area. Risk assessments for the indoor and outdoor environments and particular activities are completed. Safety of the environment is checked daily by EYFS practitioners.

It is our policy at Heathfield to have all personal mobiles turned off whilst supervising children. iPads are used to record progress and to enable the engagement of parents in their child's learning. Parents provide permission for this.

At Heathfield, we comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000, along with GDPR regulation. The Prince Albert Community Trust Data Protection Officer is informed of any data breaches.

We use photographs of children where permission has been gained:

- On the school website and social media
- On the school plasma screen
- On corridor and classroom displays
- In children's learning journeys

## **Missing Children**

In the unlikely event of a child going missing school policy will be followed.

We will:

- immediately search the school premises, both indoors and outdoors
- contact the parent/carer
- if necessary, inform the police

- review school security systems
- make any necessary changes to ensure the safety of children

## **Complaints Procedure**

If a parent has a concern or complaint school policy will be followed. Any complaints are treated seriously and are investigated. Details are also provided in our information booklet for parents.

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in the light of any significant new developments or in response to changes in guidance.