



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Signed: Chair of Governors

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## Statement of Intent

“The early years foundation stage (EYFS) sets the statutory standards that all early years providers must meet. This includes all maintained schools, non-maintained schools, independent schools and all providers on the Early Years Register.

The EYFS aims to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

(Department for Education 2024)

At Heartwood Primary School we give every child the best possible start to their education. Our school motto is 'Learn to Love - Love to Learn' and we are passionate about providing a happy, caring family atmosphere where children are able to develop a lifelong love of learning.

Within our school family we value all children as individuals and strive to create a stimulating learning environment which is relevant to each child and is enriched with a wide range of exciting experiences.

We value the close partnership we have with parents and carers as we work together to ensure that all children can achieve to the best of their abilities.

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## 1. Responsibilities

- 1.1. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Early Years Policy of Heartwood Primary School
- 1.2. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the physical Early Years Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to: ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 1.3. The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the School's complaints policy.
- 1.4. The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Early Years Policy of Heartwood Primary School
- 1.5. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for following the Early Years Policy.

## 2. Principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### 2.1. A unique child:

- Every child is a unique, competent learner.
- Children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.
- Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### 2.2. Positive relationships:

- Children learn to be strong, independent individuals by developing secure relationships with teachers and peers alike.
- Relationships with parents and carers are also important and will be nurtured and developed.
- Any relationship will be respectful, caring and professional.

### 2.3. Enabling environments:

- The learning and play environments are vital for supporting and extending a child's development.

- In the classroom and outdoor environment, we observe and assess the children's development and interests.
- Based on these observations, suitably challenging activities and experiences are planned to extend their learning and achievement.

#### 2.4. Learning and development:

- Heartwood Primary School is organised in a way that encourages children to explore and learn safely.
- There are areas for activities and play, and others for quiet time and rest.
- The setting is designed to enable children to learn and play independently.

### 3. Welfare

Safety and security is a high priority at Heartwood Primary School and it is important that all children in our care are safe. Our requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 are as follows:

- 3.1. To promote the safety and welfare of the children in our care.
- 3.2. To promote good health and prevent the spread of infection by taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- 3.3. To manage the behaviour of the children in our care in a way that is appropriate for their individual needs and stage of development (please refer to behaviour policy on the school website).
- 3.4. To ensure that adults who have access to children, or who look after children are suitably vetted and trained.
- 3.5. To ensure that the setting is fit for purpose and that furniture and equipment is safe.
- 3.6. To maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe and efficient management of the setting.

### 4. Relationships

- 4.1. At Heartwood Primary School, we feel it is important for children to learn how to interact socially and to develop respectful relationships with peers and adults. We teach the children how to be 'Ready, Respectful and Safe' through our whole school behaviour policy.
- 4.2. We encourage good citizenship based on Christian values.

### 5. Safeguarding

- 5.1. The Childcare Act 2006 states that safeguarding and welfare requirements are given legal force by regulations under section 39(1)(b).

Safety is paramount and Heartwood Primary School has a robust and effective Safeguarding Policy to ensure the children in our care are protected.

## 6. The parent / teacher partnership

6.1. The Early Years Foundation Setting cannot function without the enduring support of parents and carers.

6.2. We recognise that as parent and carer, you are the child's primary educator and we recognise this important role through regular engagement including:

- Annual reports in the summer term.
- Asking parents/carers to complete admissions forms and a medical form.
- Asking parents/carers to sign permission slips for visits out of school, use of photographs of their child for assessment purposes and using the internet at school.
- Having an open door policy to enable parents/carers to come and speak with teachers, should they have any concerns.
- Collection of evidence shared by staff and parents/carers to record children's achievements in the form of Focus Child sheets.
- Termly parent/carer appointments to discuss their child's learning.
- Half-termly work shares where parents/carers are invited into the classroom to see their child's learning
- Events and activities throughout the year which bring together children, parents/carers and the school.
- Sharing learning on Tapestry

## 7. Learning and development

The Childcare Act 2006 states that learning and development requirements are a legal requirement under section 39(1)(a). Our foundation stage has one Nursery classroom with attached outdoor area and one Reception classroom with a large outdoor classroom. All of our learning environments are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely in all areas of learning. The seven areas of learning are defined as 'prime' and 'specific':

7.1. The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:

- Communication and language.
- Physical development.
- Personal, social and emotional development.

7.2. The 'specific' areas (through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied) of learning and development are:

- Literacy.

- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.

7.3. The Early Learning Goals summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that children should have gained by the end of the Reception year

7.4. Learning and development is implemented through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity and play and is reactive to the child's lead.

7.5. Play is important to learning and development and we therefore do not make a distinction between work and play. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills.

7.6. We use the interests of the child, cultural celebrations and seasonal changes to guide our planning and provision which allows flexibility to ensure that children's levels of engagement are high, and they are having a broad range of new experiences.

7.7. The curriculum planned and taught in EYFS provides the foundations and building blocks to enable children to access the National Curriculum when they reach year 1. Our 'Making a Difference' curriculum is progressive in skills, knowledge and vocabulary which is then built on in Key Stage 1.

7.8. We follow the Read, Write Inc. programme to teach phonics in every class (please refer to reading section on the school website).

7.9. We teach maths in Reception through the mastery approach, which ensures consistency with KS1 and 2.

7.10. We plan children's activities to reflect their interests and needs. Every child is planned for according to their individual stage in development to ensure they have access to challenging and enjoyable experiences.

7.11. Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and plan activities and support.

7.12. Assessment is conducted through observation and informal teacher progress records. Evidence is documented on Tapestry and in children's books in the form of observation notes, photographs, quotes from children and items produced by the children.

7.13. Assessment is used to produce a 'Gaps and Strengths Analysis' once a term; teachers then adapt the provision to meet the needs of the children.

7.14. 'Thrive' and 'Talk Boost' intervention sessions are planned to address any gaps children have and provide extra support for them.

7.15. We support children in using the characteristics of effective learning from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which are:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'
- Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, they enjoy their achievements
- Creative and critical thinking – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Practitioners reflect on the different ways children learn and use these to guide their planning and learning experiences provided.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

## 8. Health and safety

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 detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2021) and we adhere to the school's safeguarding policy.

8.1. Our full Health and Safety Policy is available on request.

8.2. Our full Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy is available on the school website.

8.3. The following general Health and Safety safeguards are in place:

- A supply of fresh drinking water is available on the premises at all times.
- Children's dietary needs are acted upon.
- Rolling snack is available throughout the day. Our children under 5 receive free milk and all children have access to free fruit from a Government scheme. Reception children are eligible for free school meals or can choose

to bring in a healthy packed lunch. Nursery children who attend all day are welcome to order a school meal. This is charged for.

- Staff involved in preparing and handling food have received training in food hygiene.
- A first aider is accessible at all times. There is at least one member of staff in Nursery and Reception who has a current paediatric first aid certificate on the premises and available at all times and will accompany children on trips/outings.
- Accidents and injuries are recorded in an accident book with body map. Parents are informed of any accident or injury sustained by the child on the same day or as soon as reasonably practical and advised of any first aid treatment given. Head injuries are reported to parents via phone call within a reasonable time of the child sustaining the injury.
- There is a first aid box accessible at all times with appropriate content for use with children.
- There are an adequate number of toilets and hand basins available.
- There are suitable and hygienic changing facilities for changing any children who are in nappies and there is an adequate supply of clean spare clothes.
- Where required children have intimate care plans, any intimate care given is recorded by member of staff.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy are in place.
- A Photographs and Images Policy is in place which states that cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff member's own personal use.
- The use of mobile phones/personal cameras is prohibited. This applies to staff and parents on site.

## 9. The learning environment and outdoor spaces

- 9.1. The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment.
- 9.2. Equipment and resources are accessible and can be located and used independently by children.
- 9.3. Children have access to an outdoor area on a daily basis. The enclosed outdoor space is secure and offers children the ability to explore a different environment, presenting them with diverse challenges and experiences. These will be different from those provided inside.
- 9.4. Activities are planned throughout the learning environment to help the children develop in all areas of learning.
- 9.5. Our classrooms and learning environment meets the indoor space requirement of 2.3 m<sup>2</sup> per child.

## 10. Staff

- 10.1. Every class in the Early Years has a qualified Teacher. The class teacher is the 'key person' for every child in the class.
- 10.2. In Nursery there is at least one member of staff for every 13 children. One member of staff holds qualified teacher status as defined by section 122 of the Education Act 2002 and at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- 10.3. Our adults take an active role in children's learning and development through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

## 11. Transition periods

At Heartwood Primary School we recognise that starting school and moving up to the next class has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. We have established a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents are as confident and comfortable as they can be.

- 11.1. The following process is in place to ensure children's smooth and successful transition to their Reception/Nursery class:

1

- Members of staff from Heartwood Primary School make links to feeder settings. Teaching staff arrange to visit the the pre-schools to share information through professional dialogue. The number of meetings/visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.

2

- Reception Teaching staff visit pupils in their pre-school settings.
- Reception Teacher visits children in Mouse Class in Summer 2.
- Year 1 Teacher visits the Reception children in class during Summer 2.

3

- New Nursery and Reception parents/carers are given the relevant information to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes, and are given the opportunity to ask any questions they have.

4

- Teachers arrange a transition meeting to share information about children moving up into new classes.

5

- Children starting in the Nursery are offered a home visit at the end of the summer term in order for the child to meet their teacher in a familiar environment. This is a good opportunity for parents to ask any questions about starting Nursery and the teacher to find out about the child's specific interests.
- We can offer children a place in our Nursery from the term after they turn 3 years of age, providing we have a space available. We offer a home visit to children starting Nursery after Christmas and Easter.

6

- Pupils joining Reception attend on a staggered basis to allow staff to settle them in to full time school effectively. In the first week of the Autumn term, half of the class will attend in the morning and half in the afternoon. For the second week, this will then be extended to include lunch times before all children attend for the full days in week 3.