



EYFS Policy

| | |
|---|--|
| Governor Committee Responsible | L&T |
| Review period | ANNUAL |
| Policy approved by Governors/Head Teacher | Head Teacher |
| Meeting minute reference | HT |
| Status | STATUTORY |
| Next review | SPRING 2020 |
| Document version number | V1.2 |
| Author | Sarah Elliott Katharine Dodd Claudia Brooks |
| Contributors | |
| To be read in conjunction with the following policies: | |

| Document History | |
|------------------|--------|
| V1.0 | OCT 14 |
| V1.1 | OCT 17 |
| V1.2 | JAN 19 |

“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.”

(‘The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.’ DfE March 2014).

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school all children join us on a phased introduction at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

Aims

At Heather Ridge we recognise the importance of Early Years education in providing the essential foundation for all future learning. We realise that the starting point in children’s education is what they know and can do and that adults responsible for them must make themselves aware of children’s individual needs and make provision for them. We acknowledge that play is a powerful medium for learning and that in the Early Years children learn best through first-hand experience. We know that young children are particularly receptive learners and they need educational opportunities which will foster their social, moral, emotional, physical, creative and intellectual growth and development.

The children in Reception are in the final phase of the EYFS which starts at birth and ends when children enter Year 1 at the age of 5.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

A Unique Child

At Heather Ridge, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We know that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by their school and home environments and we begin to build links with the families. We observe how each child learns to gain an understanding of the characteristics they develop to become effective learners. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. During their first year at school, the children are introduced to the learning habits. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative and to use reasoning. They are taught that they can ‘grow their brains’ so that they understand that everyone can learn with practice and effort. The children are taught how to learn and how to become successful learners.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

All children and their families are valued within our school. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate because of differences. All children at Heather Ridge are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or stage of learning. We do not group children based on notions of fixed ability. We teach the children that practice and effort lead to learning and improvement. In the early years the children begin to learn to take responsibility for their learning and begin to understand the concept of challenge.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Planning for children with additional needs is in line with the Special Educational Needs & Disability policy.

In the EYFS we have realistic and challenging expectations and 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 through a creative curriculum and learning environment
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities and environments to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which each child's contribution is valued
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

It is vital that all children in the school are safe. Through citizenship teaching and the nurturing programme we provide children with opportunities to help them develop the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards both in the real and virtual world.

Positive Relationships

At Heather Ridge we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. We develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise the important role parents play in educating the children, after all they know their child the best! We aim to build a close and positive partnership with parents. We do this by:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts our school
- inviting the children to spend time with their teacher in the classroom before starting at school
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- encouraging parents to attend consultation meetings in the first two terms to discuss their child's progress
- providing parents with a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year
- encouraging parents to contribute observations to the children's Tapestry online learning journal
- fortnightly newsletters with important learning information and key dates
- sharing our approach to how children learn and how best parents can support

- inviting parents to curriculum meetings where appropriate and also to support in the classes
- encouraging parents to take an active role and interest in their child's education

Staff develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

We have good links with the local feeder playgroups and visits are undertaken prior to the children starting school to ensure that the EYFS teachers have the opportunity to meet the children in their playgroup setting to gain as much knowledge about the children as they can.

Enabling Environments

At Heather Ridge we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The role of both the indoor and outdoor environment in learning/organisation of learning provides opportunities for child initiated activities reflecting the topic where they can further develop gross motor skills, social skills etc. We provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.

Teaching and Learning: Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

| Characteristics of Effective Learning | |
|---|---|
| Playing and exploring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · finding out and exploring · playing with what they know · being willing to have a go | Active learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · being involved and concentrating · keeping trying · enjoying achieving what they set out to do |
| | Creating and thinking critically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · having their own ideas · making links · choosing ways to do things |
| Area of Learning and Development | Aspect |
| Prime Areas | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making relationships • Self-confidence and self-awareness • Managing feeling and behaviour |
| <p>This area focuses on children learning to work, play, build relationships, co-operate with others and function as a group beyond the family. Aspects of Personal, Social and Emotional Development are constantly promoted right across the curriculum as well as in specific activities, circle times and discussions, so that children can develop a positive sense of themselves right from the start.</p> <p>We recognise that unless a child's personal, social and emotional needs are met the learning that can take place in other curriculum areas will be limited.</p> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Development (PD) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving and handling • Health and self-care |
| <p>Children develop physical control, mobility, awareness of space, and fine and gross manipulative skills both inside and outside. Dance, gymnastics, small games apparatus and the adventure playground are all used. In the Summer Term swimming lessons are offered. Fine motor skills are developed through writing, tracing, colouring, painting, cutting, threading, dough, clay and many other aspects of manipulative play.</p> | |

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and Language (CL) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening and attention • Understanding • Speaking |
| <p>All children are encouraged to participate as speakers and listeners in a variety of situations and for a range of purposes and audiences, using and extending language in an imaginative way. They are taught to use talk to clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events, as well as learning to sustain attentive listening in different contexts.</p> | |
| <p>Specific areas</p> | |
| <p>Literacy (LIT)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing |
| <p>We aim for children to enjoy books and begin to become independent and confident readers. They are taught to recognise a range of familiar and common words as well as to apply their phonic knowledge when reading. Many other reading related activities are used to support children's learning.</p> <p>Children learn the difference between speaking and writing, and between print and pictures. They are given a range of opportunities to write for different purposes. They work with the EYFS team to develop and write down their ideas. They learn to use their phonic knowledge as well as beginning to refer to word banks. Children are also encouraged to practise their developing writing skills in play-based situations provided across the curriculum.</p> <p>Correct letter formation and orientation is taught as a discrete activity as well as using many other cross-curricular opportunities to develop fine and gross motor control.</p> <p>Phonological awareness is taught in a structured way using the relevant steps from Letters and Sounds and Jolly Phonics. Children learn how to hear, identify and write letter sounds as well as blend and segment sounds for reading and writing.</p> | |
| <p>Mathematics (MA)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number • Shape space and measure |
| <p>This involves developing aspects of mathematical understanding through stories, songs, games, imaginative play and many other practical activities. Children learn about counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shape, space and measures. Problem solving skills are developed by using real life situations, both spontaneous and planned.</p> | |
| <p>Understanding the World (UW)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and communities • The world • Technology |
| <p>This area of learning includes Science, Geography, History, Technology, RE (other cultures) and ICT. Children develop knowledge and understanding of their immediate and local environment, other people, and features of the natural and man-made world. Children are involved in many practical experiences particularly encouraging use of the senses to develop the investigative scientific skills of observing, predicting and communicating findings. Simple recording is done initially with adult support moving towards independent recording. Other forms of recording are introduced later. They begin to develop skills, knowledge and understanding with particular reference to their homes, school and immediate local environment. Topics focus on the child's own lifetime, on sequencing events and the use of historical language. In Technology children are taught to use the computer across the curriculum for picture making, word processing and how to move or arrange symbols. Early awareness of the use of controls is encouraged. The use of programmable toys and the Interactive Whiteboard are included. Children are also taught</p> | |

to become aware of the uses of ICT in everyday life. They also use the computer to support learning in other areas of the curriculum.

**Expressive Arts and Design
(EAD)**

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Imagination

This area of learning and experience develops children's imagination and ability to communicate and express ideas and feelings in creative ways both indoors and out, e.g. through Art, Music, Drama, Dance and Role Play. Expressive arts and design activities involve designing and making by choosing and using materials and equipment to cut, join, fold or build.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Throughout the EYFS curriculum we plan activities to give children learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for the National Curriculum. We put the interests and needs of our children at the heart of everything we do and we actively encourage children to initiate their own ideas and become involved in the planning stages. Teaching and learning takes place within the indoor and outdoor classrooms and we operate a free flow system where the children have access to all the different areas. The outdoor area complements and enhances the indoor learning. We believe that planned, purposeful play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. A weekly focus is based on the learning objectives linked to the EY curriculum and shared with all EYFS staff. We plan first hand experiences and provide opportunities for challenges appropriate to the development of the children. Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis and our planning is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. Our weekly planning may alter in response to the needs of the children. We make regular informal and formal assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

In the EYFS, assessment of attainment and progress is based on observation, discussion, questioning and evidence of children's independent learning. Valuable evidence of children's learning is obtained through observation of independent and targeted learning. These observations are undertaken by EYFS team and are recorded through Tapestry which parents are able to access. Each child's progress is also recorded against 17 assessment scales derived from the ELGs (Early Learning Goals) These are entered regularly onto the school's data system and monitored regularly by the Head Teacher and SLT.

Settling In

Every effort is made to ensure the settling in period is as smooth and trouble free as possible for both the child and their family.

- Children start the Autumn Term with a staggered entry during the first two weeks of the Autumn Term. Children with specific needs will liaise with the SENCo, Head Teacher and class teacher to ensure an effortless transition

- EYFS have their own playground separate to the rest of the school which they use throughout the day. They slowly integrate with the rest of the school over the Autumn Term
- Children are encouraged to get involved in whole school events e.g. assemblies, harvest festival, as appropriate. Year R children take part in their own Christmas performance
- Parents are kept informed of how their children are settling through discussion with the class teacher as necessary.

Transition to Year 1

At Heather Ridge, we recognise the importance of a smooth transition from Year R to Year 1 to ensure the children move gradually and happily into KS1 and that learning and progress are continuous. Whilst the ethos and philosophy remain the same, there is also a gradual shift in classroom organisation as the children mature, allowing time for introducing more formal skills within the National Curriculum. The EYFS teachers meet with the Year 1 teachers to discuss the children prior to their moving up day when all children are able to visit their new classrooms.