



EYFS Policy: Sept 2024

Completed by: EYFS Lead

This policy will be reviewed in line with the policy review timetable.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfill their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up."

- 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'

At Heron Primary School we recognise and value the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in preparing the children for future learning and development. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life.

The EYFS framework applies to children from birth to five years of age. The last year of EYFS is the reception year. At Heron the children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

Children joining our school come with a variety of experiences and have already learnt a great deal. The EYFS practitioners build on this prior learning and experience, working together with Parents/Carers to support and further the children's development.

Intent

The aims of EYFS at Heron are to help children achieve the five outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

We intend to:

- Provide and deliver a relevant, broad, carefully structured, creative and balanced curriculum using both the indoor and outdoor environments
- Provide opportunities for learning, based on what the children already know and can do

- Work in partnership with Parents/Carers and value their contributions
- Provide opportunities to learn and transfer skills and knowledge through play
- Enable children to learn through making choices and decision making, encouraging independence and self-confidence
- Ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, feel included, secure and valued, and have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable EYFS
- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring environment in which each child's contribution is valued
- Be sensitive to the individual needs of each child
- Use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- Monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary
- Prepare children for life outside school

Our Principles

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.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The characteristics of effective learning are a key element in the EYFS. They detail the ways in which children learn from their environment, experiences and activities. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are;

- **Playing and Exploring** - children investigate and explore, and 'have a go'
- **Active Learning** - children concentrate, persevere if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Implementation

At Heron Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all Areas of Learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected. The children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in the activities and their learning.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of the following Areas of Learning:

PRIME AREAS

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication & Language

SPECIFIC AREAS

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These Areas of Learning are equally important and opportunities need to be provided in all areas to support a rounded approach to child development. At

Heron we deliver all Areas of Learning through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Our curriculum is underpinned by Drivers which reflect our pupils and our community. Our Drivers are:-

Healthy Living
Express Yourself
Respect
Our World
Never Give Up

In EYFS our Drivers are planned for and promoted regularly. Our curriculum is planned and delivered through a series of themes, each of which offer experiences in all Areas of Learning. However, there is flexibility within our curriculum to deliver skills, knowledge and understanding, by planning appropriate play and learning experiences based on the children's interests and needs. We use a range of strategies, matching the needs of all children and identifying the best way for all children to learn at that time.

Assessment, recording and monitoring

At our school we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet each child's developmental and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process. The majority of this type of assessment is based on informal observations of child-initiated or independent work.

The EYFS Profile provides a framework for making judgments about children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It summarises all the assessments undertaken, and makes statements about the child's achievements against all 17 Early Learning Goals. The judgments are made on a regular basis by the Class Teachers. We also undertake in-house and local cluster group moderation.

Learning through play

Play is a powerful educational method. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems; they express feelings and re-live experiences in controlled and safe situations. In their play, children can be inquisitive, creative, questioning and experimental and will learn at their highest level.

Inclusion

All children will be given opportunities to participate in all activities and due consideration will be given to the principles of Inclusion.

Impact

Our curriculum ensures that pupils are ready for the next stage of education. They have the knowledge and skills to access their learning in Key Stage 1.

Staffing and Organisation

The maximum intake at our school is sixty pupils for each cohort. In reception there are two classes. Each class has one Class Teacher and one Teaching Assistant, maintaining a ratio of 1:15. The children have daily opportunities for structured and free-flow play, both indoors and in the EYFS outside area ('The Yard' and 'The Garden'). We (the EYFS Practitioners) act as facilitators to the children's learning. Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants liaise, and are involved in planning, preparation and assessment. We are encouraged to participate in CPD, including relevant local authority training and local cluster group training. We also conduct and attend in-house training and disseminate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods to colleagues.

The Learning Environment

At Heron we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience. We also intend to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence. Activities are planned for both the inside and outside; children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom during the school day.

Home/School Links

We recognise that Parents/Carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When Parents/Carers and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. We aim to develop this by:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts school during a home visit
- Giving the children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher in the Summer term prior to starting school
- Inviting parents to the induction meeting in May/June
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- Organising a curriculum meeting in early September
- Encouraging Parents/Carers to complete the home/school admissions forms
- Operating an "open door" policy, whereby Parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- Encouraging parents to complete 'Wow' moments, on Class Dojo, sharing and celebrating their child's achievements.
- Encouraging Parents/Carers to listen to their child read each day and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary
- Encouraging relevant learning activities and library books to be undertaken/shared at home

- Providing an annual written report to Parents/Carers in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and EYFS assessment scales

Safeguarding and welfare

Most members of our EYFS team have received Paediatric First Aid training. (05.09.2021).

In relation to other aspects of safeguarding and welfare in the EYFS the following information and policies should be referred to.

- Child Protection (Keeping Children Safe in Education)
- Health & Safety
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Who Work With Children and Young People
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying and Anti-Hate Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Physical Intervention & Restraint Policy
- Pupil Acceptable Internet Use Policy
- Offsite Visit Policy
- SEN Policy
- Safer Recruitment Procedures
- Home / School Agreement
- Starting School Booklet

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The Head teacher and subject leaders carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.