



Heron Hill Primary School



learning together

playing together

growing together



The school has "an ambitious and forward-thinking culture, a strong leadership team which ensures that the views and interests of pupils are considered when providing learning opportunities."

"Governors are equally ambitious for the school and share the commitment of you and your staff to provide a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum."

"Staff place great emphasis on the mental health of pupils and create opportunities to enhance well-being."

Ofsted

Welcome to Heron Hill Primary School and Nursery

I invite you, through the pages of this brochure, to glimpse our wonderful school.

We are a growing school. We have grown a nursery, wrap around care, a secret garden, a polytunnel, allotment beds and a team of thriving specialist teachers. Planted in this home, your children will grow. They will grow to be strong readers, mathematicians and eager for knowledge. They will play their way to being stronger teammates.

I have the privilege of leading a united team of gardeners (teaching staff), who love growing children's minds in the fresh air, as well as in the classroom. As a result, children talk intelligently about their environment, draw from observation and see the scientific effects of growing in different mediums. Over sixty staff contribute their dedication and skills to ensure learning is memorable. We have exceptionally ambitious standards of achievement. This ensures that each child reaches their highest potential.



Our key values are respect, responsibility and relationships. These are reflected both in our curriculum and interactions with one another. We nurture relationships which allow children and staff success and ownership. We are not, 'running a school,' but are growing an amazing community and building the lives of the future families in Kendal.

Nurturing happy, confident, enthusiastic children who are curious about the world around them is central to our vision. We aim to build close partnerships with parents and carers, recognising that working together helps to secure each child's future success and happiness.

I am grateful for the times I have had so far here at Heron Hill and I look forward enthusiastically to each new season of growth. I have been deeply moved by the welcome I received here. I extend that in turn to you and invite you to come and belong here too.

Trish Merritt
Headteacher

learning together

Aims and Ethos

We want each and every child at the school to:

- Feel happy and safe
- Respect and value themselves and others
- Celebrate diversity in school, our community and beyond
- Succeed through challenging and inspirational learning
- Grow into independent and responsible individuals
- Develop a lasting appetite for learning and to look forward to their future with confidence

"For me personally the support for children that need extra help is great, I am kept up-to-date with how I can help him at home and what school are doing for him. The communication platforms work well. "

Parent Questionnaire 2022

We know every child is different and every child in our care is treated as an individual. Our dedicated and experienced staff encourage children to believe, achieve and succeed. We want our children to think big and adopt an 'I can' attitude, be determined, resilient and have a go.



playing together

Curriculum

At Heron Hill we are continually developing and enhancing the curriculum. We provide a broad and enriched curriculum where children and teachers are enthused and have fun.

The Nursery and Reception classes follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Thereafter, English and Mathematics follow the National Curriculum whilst making links from and to other areas. Foundation subjects are covered through cross-curricular themes and often involve experts visiting school or educational visits. Physical Education taught in school time is enhanced through a broad range of extra-curricular clubs and opportunities open to all students. Details of the current curriculum at Heron Hill are updated regularly on the school's website.

Highly Skilled Staff

Experienced and dedicated teachers are the most important resource for children's learning. At Heron Hill our teaching staff, supported by a team of highly experienced teaching assistants, oversee the delivery of our core curriculum and provide an individual educational programme to each student tailored to their unique abilities and needs.

As a large primary school, we have two classes in each year group. This enables us to plan and work collaboratively within each year group and share resources and expertise between teaching staff.



"Heron hill is a wonderful school, my child gets all the support and help he needs to achieve all that he can. The staff are welcoming and informative and always helpful."
Parent Questionnaire 2022

Learning Beyond the Classroom

Whilst delivery of the school's curriculum is core to the work undertaken at Heron Hill, it is the range and breadth of the extra-curricular activities available at our school that truly sets us apart. Teachers, teaching assistants, governors and parent volunteers together with expert coaches and instructors provide a range of pre-school and after-school clubs for the students.

We run lunch time and after school clubs to support the curriculum (e.g. Mathematics and English, reading and writing as well as homework clubs).



Yoga	Rounders	Hockey
Orienteering	Gardening	Tag Rugby
Chess	French	Handball
Kwik Cricket	Bee Club	Squash
Athletics	Cross Country	Lacrosse
Dance	Lego Club	Den Building



"We go outside to learn phonics, maths and geography. We love walking down and looking at the bees, we just love being outside. Get ready for laughter!
The teachers are so funny."

Year 3 pupils

Good links with the wider community enable many children to participate in activities with other local schools and organisations.

Peripatetic music teachers and sports coaches are used in school to give students a range of opportunities to extend their learning. In addition children learn the ukulele and we have a thriving school choir in Key Stage 2.



Each year we run residential trips for pupils in Year 4, 5 and 6. Recently we have enjoyed city visits to Manchester as well as an annual residential based at Ingleton where students take part in a series of adventurous pursuits including rock climbing, caving and mountaineering.



"Heron Hill is a fantastic school! Everyone who works in the school (in all roles) is a credit to the school. We could not have asked for our son to attend a better school. A huge thank you to all for helping our son grow emotionally, mentally and physically."
Parent Questionnaire 2022

"We are new to the school and can't tell you how pleased we are with the school's support. We have been warmly welcomed and treated with great care and we truly appreciate it."
Parent Questionnaire 2022



Leadership

The school is led by an experienced senior leadership team comprising the Headteacher, Deputy Head, Assistant Head, Special Educational Needs Leader (SENDCo), Early Years Lead, Key Stage 1 Lead and Business Manager.

Strategic oversight of the school is provided by an experienced board of governors representing parents and carers, staff, the Local Authority and the wider local community. School and sports councils, made up of representatives of children from each year group, meet regularly to advise and influence the school leadership on the views of the students.

growing together

School Environment

Set in over 6 acres of mature parkland to the south of Kendal town centre, the school buildings have been developed to provide a rich and stimulating learning environment.

We have spacious classrooms, reading areas and learning support rooms. We also have additional spaces for music, drama and a fully-equipped computer suite.



Outside, in addition to our extensive playing fields, we have a polytunnel, fire pit, canopy areas and an outdoor classroom.

We also have shady woods, a quiet garden and even our very own apiary.

Our on-site kitchen provides freshly prepared hot and cold meals for the school. Each day we offer a choice of lunch options that provide a nutritionally balanced menu made from locally sourced and quality ingredients. Lunch choices can be ordered in advance using our convenient online ordering system.

"Teachers have been particularly wonderful with our youngest child and we are very grateful for their cheerful, calm and caring nature. Thank you!"

Parent Questionnaire 2022

The School Journey: From Nursery and Reception, to moving on

Most children begin their time at Heron Hill in our Nursery. Set in a separate building on our site, the Nursery offers provision for children from 3 to 4 years of age. Parents can choose full day, morning or afternoon sessions to suit their needs. Nursery staff liaise closely with parents to settle children into new routines and ensure they have a happy start to their school experience.

We offer a flexible induction into Reception designed around the child's particular needs and work closely with parents and carers to ensure children receive a smooth and comfortable induction or transition into school. Our bright and spacious Reception department admits up to 60 children each year. Most children who attend our Nursery will join the Reception classes which are spread out over three indoor and one outdoor classroom. The children continue with the Early Years Foundation Stage until they join Key Stage 1 in Year 1.

Our experienced staff work closely with children as they transition from one year to the next throughout their time at Heron Hill to help them become familiar with their new teacher and classroom.

As the children reach Year 6 we work very closely with the local secondary schools to make the transition to Year 7 a smooth one. Children will visit secondary schools on many occasions in their Junior years and we invite secondary colleagues into school to meet and get to know the children.



Wrap Around Care – The Hive

Heron Hill school provides its own Wrap Around Care provision called The Hive.

Before and After School Care and Holiday Clubs are based in and around our extensive school grounds.

Please see the information sheet inside the back cover sleeve for more details. Full details about costs and places are also available on the school website.



"My favourite lesson is art because it is so relaxing. I enjoy it when we go into the Quiet Garden to draw. I like going to the woods to do yoga – it is really peaceful and beautiful."
Child comment

Health and Welfare

A healthy lifestyle is encouraged for all members of the school community.

Learning takes place outdoors whenever possible, come rain or shine, whether it is Reception children going on a bear hunt in our woods, or children planting, tending and cooking vegetables from our own kitchen garden.

Active playtimes are always encouraged in our extensive outdoor areas. Children enjoy a variety of play environments and a wide selection of playtime equipment.

We challenge and inspire children, parents, staff and governors to make healthy lifestyle choices as part of their daily life through initiatives such as walk ride or scoot to school.



Safeguarding

Ensuring our children are safe both in and out of school is central to everything we do at Heron Hill.

In an ever-changing and challenging world, we believe that teaching our children how to keep themselves safe and to know where to go for support and help is a vital part of education.

Our children follow the Kidsafe programme from Year 2 onwards. Heron Hill is one of the founder members of Kidsafe, a national safeguarding programme, which helps children to feel confident to speak out to keep themselves safe, including online.



The School within the Community

The Kendal Collaborative Partnership is a consortium of schools from in and around Kendal that work together to provide the best possible experiences for all children. As members, we enjoy sporting, musical and cultural events that are often jointly planned and we benefit from regular staff training and professional development opportunities. We also have close links with the local secondary schools, especially around transition from Year 6 to Year 7.


As part of the Kendal Primary Partnership Schools Direct programme, we help to select, interview and train the next generation of teachers. This provides us with high quality teaching students to support us in school.

Friends of Heron Hill is our parent-teacher association. In addition to fund raising and giving practical support to the school, a rich programme of events is organised throughout the year including family picnics, free school uniform swaps, Christmas and Summer Fairs.

The School Council works on a variety of local projects. Past and current projects include planting wildflower meadows, building and installing bat boxes and the study of pollinating insects throughout the area.



"I've always found all the staff at Heron Hill friendly and approachable and feel it is a very well organised, welcoming school. My child has flourished at Heron Hill and is challenged to achieve his potential." Parent Questionnaire 2022



We have our own colonies of honeybees but feel it vitally important to share with our school community the importance of all bees. Within our extensive grounds, we have purposefully created a wonderful environment that consists of nesting sites and habitat, as well as year-round forage for bumblebees and solitary bees.

Our honeybees live in the fully-accessible apiary at the bottom of the school field and we have created a unique viewing hide that sits alongside. This fantastic space offers our pupils an up-close and personal view of the bees without the need to don a full bee-suit and veil.

We are a Beacon School – the first school to be recognised as such. This prestigious title, awarded by the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) is given to schools which demonstrate sustained best practice in beekeeping and apiculture, acting as Centres of Excellence in teaching young people about the craft of beekeeping.

‘The Bee Team’ run after-school clubs which are available to children from Year 4 upwards. Throughout the year all our children are able to enjoy a bee experience of one sort or another, from filling their own jar of our honey to learning about the science of wax and candle making. Opportunities to learn about bees are embedded across the curriculum where meaningful links can be made.

