

Approved: __4 February 2015_____

Committee: Pupils and Curriculum

Signed: ___M Knight_____

To be reviewed: Two years _____

School Website: Yes

Heron Hill Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the area of education upon which young children build the rest of their lives. It is a single framework for care, learning and development. All children should be given the opportunity to experience the best possible start to their education to develop solid foundations which will ensure that they flourish throughout their school years and on into adulthood.

Each child's learning and development is planned using Early Years Outcomes which identify the developing knowledge and skills, understanding and attitudes that children will need if they are to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Rich, stimulating and appropriate experiences provide each child with opportunities to develop their skills, competencies and thinking to the best of their ability across all areas of learning.

Purpose

- To make the child's first experience of school happy, positive and fun.
- To ensure that all children feel valued and secure in the Foundation Stage setting with positive relationships between parents, carers and staff.
- To ensure a breadth of balance in the curriculum through carefully planned adult input and sensitive interaction using Early Years Outcomes whilst having regard for the skills and attitudes the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum will demand.
- To encourage parents to become partners with the school in the education of their children. Parents/carers are valued as their child's first educators. Staff will work in partnership with families at every opportunity.
- To provide a curriculum firmly based on active learning to meet the needs of the individual child. Within any Early Years Foundation Stage cohort there will be wide variations in terms of development and maturity as well as family, religion, cultural background and special needs. Children will have differing experiences, interests, skills and knowledge which affect both their learning paces and styles. This diversity will be catered for within the planning which has a flexible approach, using a wide range of strategies and teaching styles to address particular needs of the children, families and the community. No child should be disadvantaged but each encouraged to develop self esteem and confidence in their ability to learn.
- To further a love of learning, enquiring minds and the ability to discuss, adapt and negotiate. Well planned play and purposeful activity with challenge and enjoyment, both in and out of doors, will provide opportunity for teaching and learning. Within a well planned, organised environment, children should be able to explore, question, test, observe,

experiment, plan, make decisions for themselves and participate in activities which are planned by adults as well as those they plan and start themselves.

- To provide children with quality time to become engrossed in an activity. Adult intervention at appropriate times will help to deepen, extend and embed their learning.
- To monitor progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, while taking action to identify areas of concern and provide necessary support.
- To help children develop self-control and to respect the feelings, needs, culture and the abilities of others.

Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development. All areas are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development.

There are four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy
 - mathematics
 - understanding the world
 - expressive arts and design.
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- **Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
 - **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
 - **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups and to have confidence in their own abilities.
 - **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
 - **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
 - **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
 - **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Staff must consider the individual needs, interests, stage of development of each child in their care and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development. Staff working with the youngest children are expected to

focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. But throughout the early years, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff must discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Staff must consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. They should link with, and help families to access, relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

English as an Additional Language

For children whose home language is not English, staff will take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Staff will ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, staff must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, staff will explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

The Role of the Adult

Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. 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. There is an on going judgement to be made by staff about the balance between activities led by children and activities led or guided by adults. Staff should respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. **The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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 and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment

This includes;

- An entry profile compiled through home visits and feeder preschool and nursery settings.
- Early Years Foundation Stage Outcome statements highlighted and tracked.
- Foundation Stage Profile – an assessment process based on the seven areas of learning. It sums up progress and learning across the Reception year
- Dated observations of specific noteworthy development (sticky labels, photographs kept)

- Information from parents (informal and through parents' evenings)
- Dated samples of work indicating development in some skills
- Observation of children throughout the year (planned and unplanned)

Assessment, gathered as above, will be used to identify the next step in children's learning and therefore help children make progress towards achieving their potential.

Records Kept In Nursery

- Early Years Outcomes sheets – ongoing highlighted and tracked assessment including entry levels taken from Early Years Foundation Stage
- Specific assessments made on entry and then on a termly basis: write a name, draw a pattern, draw a man, scissor control, colours, shapes, rote counting and number recognition
- Parents' Profile (from home visit and consultations)
- Information from pre-school/Nursery
- A 'Learning Journey' will be started for each child to include annotated achievements, photographs, observations and parental contributions
- Letters and Sounds phonics phase 1 assessment sheet.

Records Kept in Reception

- Reading Record Book (ongoing record and assessment)
- Early Years Outcomes sheets – ongoing highlighted and tracked assessment including entry levels taken from Early Years Foundation Stage
- A 'Learning Journey' will be continued for each child to include annotated achievements, photographs, observations and parental contributions
- Whole school tracker for phonic phases
- Three specific writing assessments per year

Progress within the EYFS is tracked by individual teachers showing termly levels within bandings.

Written reports are given to parents at the end of the school year. Reception parents also receive EYFS Profile levels for 17 aspects of the curriculum plus a comment on Characteristics of Learning. Profile data is shared with the Year 1 teacher so that she/he can continue to help the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals if they have not done so before they can access the K.S.1 curriculum.

Key Person

Each child will be assigned a key person (a safeguarding and welfare requirement). Staff will inform parents and/or carers of the name of their child's key person and explain their role. The key person will help to ensure that the child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person will seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They will work with the SENCO to help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

In nursery, groups are divided between all members of staff with the teacher having the largest number. In Reception, classes have their own lunch time staff and children are in key person groups for activities such as phonics, guided reading and interventions.