

Early Years Policy

Heathlands School



Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Board.

The policy was agreed by FGB Committee on 18 March 2026

Next Review due March 2028

Co-Headteachers Signature:		Date: 18.3.26
Governor Signature:		Date: 18.3.26

Statement of intent

At Heathlands, we greatly value the importance of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in providing a secure foundation for future learning and development and for supporting pupils in the acquisition of essential early language and communication skills.

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the relevant DfE guidance and legislation to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build a foundation for a love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents/carers.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.
- **A language rich environment** where pupils are enabled to develop language skills, through a total communication approach including spoken English and sign language, enabling them to learn, recognise and celebrate their deaf identity.

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Childcare Act 2006
 - The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - GDPR
 - Data Protection Act 2018
- 1.2. This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
 - DfE (2025) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
 - DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education'
 - DfE (2025) 'Working together to safeguard children'
 - DfE (2024) 'The prevent duty'
 - DFE (2025) 'Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition'
- 1.3. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with all other school policies.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for ensuring that all policies within the school are implemented within the EYFS provision and whole school setting. The Governing board ensure that policies do not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

- 2.1. The **EYFS Teacher and AHT for lower school**, in conjunction with the **-Co-Headteachers**, have responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- 2.2. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and following, this policy.
- 2.3. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for remaining alert to any issues of concern in children.

3. Aims

- 3.1. Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:
 - Give each child a happy, safe and positive start to their school life in which they can establish a solid foundation for a love of learning.

- Enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure, safe and friendly atmosphere.
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing.
- Work alongside parents/carers to meet each child's individual needs to ensure they reach their full potential.

3.2. Four guiding principles shape our practice:

- 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 with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them build their learning over time. There is a strong partnership between the school and parents/carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

3.3. To put these principles into practice, the school:

- Provides a balanced curriculum which takes children's different stages of development into account.
- Promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Works in partnership with parents/carers.
- Plans challenging learning experiences, based on individual needs, which are informed by observation and assessment.
- Implements a high staff pupil ratio so that all EYFS staff know the pupils and their learning needs and development extremely well.
- Provides a safe and secure learning environment.

4. Learning and development

- 4.1. The EYFS curriculum is based on an observation of children's needs, interests and stages of development.
- 4.2. In partnership with parents/carers, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education.

- 4.3. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape education programmes in EYFS settings. These are split into two sections – Prime and Specific.
- 4.4. It is believed that secure development and consolidation first within the 3 PRIME AREAS leads into the development of the 4 Specific Areas ultimately providing progress over all 7 areas. However, all the sections are interconnected and important.
- 4.5. In conjunction with the 7 areas of learning will be close monitoring of the Characteristics of Effective Learning'. These follow 3 categories linked to 'how' the children are learning:
- a) Playing and exploring
- 4.6. The 'prime' areas of learning and development are:
- Communication and language
 - Listening, attention and understanding.
 - Speaking
 - Physical development
 - Gross motor skills
 - Fine motor skills
 - Personal, social and emotional development
 - Self-regulation
 - Managing self
 - Building relationships
- 4.7. The 'specific' areas of learning and development are:
- Literacy
 - Comprehension
 - Word Reading
 - Writing
 - Mathematics
 - Number
 - Numerical Patterns
 - Understanding the world

- Past and Present
 - People, Culture and Communities
 - The natural world
- Expressive arts and design
 - Creating with Materials
 - Being Imaginative and Expressive
- 4.8. Activities are planned to reflect children's interests and individual circumstances in order to provide each child with a challenging and enjoyable experience.
- 4.9. The **EYFS teacher** will discuss any cause for concern in a child's progress, especially in the prime areas of learning, with the child's parents/carers. A strategy of support will be agreed upon and consideration will be taken as to whether the child may have a special educational need or disability, in addition to their deafness, which requires additional support.
- 4.10. Each area of learning and development will be implemented through a mix of adult-led and pupil-initiated activity.
- 4.11. The school will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through friendly and positive interaction.
- 4.12. Activities are planned with regard to three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning in the EYFS:
- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things.
 - Active Learning – children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
 - Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

5. Inclusion

- 5.1. All children are valued as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender.
- 5.2. The EYFS curriculum is planned in order to meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace
- 5.3. All children receive the support they need and are given the best learning experience possible.

- 5.4. SEND in the EYFS setting, for pupils with needs in addition to deafness, will be monitored and managed by the school's SENCO in conjunction with the class teachers.

6. The learning environment and outdoor spaces

- 6.1. The classroom is organised in such a way that children can explore and learn in a safe environment.
- 6.2. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and daily outdoor activities are planned, unless circumstances, such as the weather, would make outdoor activity inappropriate and unsafe.
- 6.3. There are two toilet facilities available to the EYFS, and there are hygienic changing facilities located next to the nursery which contain a supply of spare clothes.

7. Assessment

- 7.1. Assessment plays an important part in helping the school to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, plan activities, and assess the need for support.
- 7.2. Parents/carers will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development, and the EYFS teacher will address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents/carers.
- 7.3. Formative assessments are used to assess the learning and development of children in the EYFS. Staff members will observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. This information will then be used to shape learning experiences for each child.
- 7.4. Pupil's learning is recoded via the electronic learning journals by both staff and parents/carers and this provides a record of children's learning, progress and supports the identification of next steps.
- 7.5. Pupils of Reception age are assessed in line with the statutory expectations for that age group and information provided to parents/carers as per national requirements.
- 7.6. All pupils at Heathlands have EHCPs. These will be reviewed on a 6 monthly basis to ensure they remain up to date. Meetings with parents/carers to discuss progress will be offered termly with a full school report and annual review meeting held in the summer term.

8. Safeguarding and welfare

- 8.1. All necessary steps are taken to keep the children in our care safe and well.

- 8.2. Any safeguarding or welfare issues will be dealt with in line with the [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#), and all members of staff in the EYFS are required to read this policy as part of their induction training.
- 8.3. The DSLs are [Sarah Shields](#) and Lesley Reeves Costi.
- 8.4. The deputy DSLs are Pauline Jordan and Sabrina Lee.
- 8.5. The DSLs are responsible for safeguarding children and liaising with local children's services as appropriate.
- 8.6. Staff will receive safeguarding training that enables them to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect

9. Mobile phones and devices

- 9.1. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'mobile phone' refers to any electronic device that can be used to take images or record videos, including tablets.

Use of mobile phones by staff members

- 9.2. Staff members must not use personal mobile phones or cameras when children are present.
- 9.3. Staff may use mobile phones on school premises outside of working hours when no children are present.
- 9.4. Staff may use mobile phones in the staffroom during breaks and non-contact time.
- 9.5. Mobile phones should be safely stored and in silent mode whilst children are present.
- 9.6. Staff may take mobile phones on trips, but they must only be used in emergencies and should not be used when children are present. Mobile phones must not be used to take images or videos at any time during trips.
- 9.7. Staff who do not adhere to this policy will face disciplinary action.
- 9.8. Staff may use their professional judgement in emergency situations.

Staff must report any concerns about another staff member's use of mobile phones to the DSL.

Use of mobile phones by parents/carers, visitors and contractors

- 9.9. Posters are used around the school to indicate that it's a mobile free zone.

- 9.10. Parents/carers, visitors and contractors are not permitted to take photographs or record videos without prior permission.
- 9.11. Parents/carers may take photographs and videos only containing their own child during school events.
- 9.12. Parents/carers may take group photographs at school events but only with the informed consent of the parents/carers of the children involved. Parents will be strongly advised that these should NOT be shared on social media.
- 9.13. Photos taken in school will only be and shared on Heathlands social media page where appropriate permission has been gained.
- 9.14. Staff must report all concerns about parents/carers, visitors and contractors to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#).

Use of the school's mobile phones and cameras

- 9.15. Staff are provided with a school device (Ipad) to ensure that only school devices are used to take photographs and videos.
- 9.16. School devices must only be used to take photographs in the presence of another staff member and only with the consent of the child's parent.
- ~~9.17.~~ Staff must not take photographs of bruising or injuries for child protection reasons. Instead, recording concerns on CPOMS.
- 9.18. School devices must not be taken off school premises without prior written permission from the Co-Headteachers or School's Business Manager
- 9.19. Where staff members have concerns over material on a school device, they must report all concerns to the DSL, following the procedures outlined in the [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#).

10. Health and safety

- 10.1. A first-aid box is located in the nursery kitchen.
- 10.2. Only medicine prescribed to a child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist will be administered and this will only be done when the appropriate medications form has been completed.
- 10.3. The EYFS teacher will report any accident or injury involving a child to their parents/carers on the day it occurs, and any first-aid treatment administered to a child will also be reported to their parents/carers.
- 10.4. Accidents and injuries to pupils will be recorded on forms held in the accident file, located in the first aid room and the completed forms given to the co-head-teachers.

- 10.5. Any injury or accident to staff will be recorded in the accident book held in the school office.
- 10.6. The co-headteachers will report any serious accident, illness, injury, or death of a child whilst in the school's care to Ofsted as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the incident occurring. Local child protection agencies will also be notified.
- 10.7. The school has a [Fire Evacuation Plan](#) in place.
- 10.8. Any food or drink provided to children is healthy, balanced and nutritious and nut-free.
- 10.9. The Co-Headteachers will notify Ofsted of any incidents of food poisoning affecting two or more children within 14 days of the incident.
- 10.10. Information about any dietary requirements, preferences, food allergies and any special health requirements a child has will be recorded.
- 10.11. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- 10.12. Smoking is not permitted on the school premises.
- 10.13. The EYFS staff follow all school health and safety policies and procedures.

11. Staff taking medication or other substances

- 11.1. The school implements a zero-tolerance approach to drugs and alcohol misuse.
- 11.2. The use of alcohol or any other substance that may affect the ability to care for children by a member of staff will not be tolerated. If there is a reason to believe a member of staff is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance, they will not be allowed to work directly with children and further action will be taken.
- 11.3. Any member of staff taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children will seek medical advice. Staff will only be allowed to work directly with the children if it is confirmed that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly.

12. Staffing

- 12.1. A robust [Recruitment Policy](#) is in place, which aims to ensure that members of staff employed in the EYFS are suitable.
- 12.2. Upon employment, all EYFS staff receive induction training to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities, including information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection and health and safety.

- 12.3. Staff will be supported to undertake the appropriate training and professional development to ensure children receive the best quality learning experience.
- 12.4. All members of staff who have contact with children and families will be supervised by the EYFS teacher. The supervision will provide opportunities for staff to:
 - Discuss any issues, particularly concerning the development or wellbeing of children, including any child protection concerns.
 - Identify solutions to address issues.
 - Receive coaching to improve their effectiveness.
- 12.5. The AHT Lower school will ensure cover is provided for the EYFS teacher in their absence and this will be a person who is deemed fully qualified to do so by the EYFS teacher/ AHT Lower school and co-headteachers.
- 12.6. There will be at least one member of staff on the school premises at all times who has a current paediatric first-aid (PFA) certificate.
- 12.7. The school will organise PFA training to be renewed every three years.
- 12.8. The list of staff who hold PFA certificates can be found in the [school office](#)
- 12.9. The school provides a staffing ratio in line with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

13. Information and records

- 13.1. Information is stored in line with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and with regard to the school's [Data Protection Policy](#).
- 13.2. The following information is recorded for each child:
 - The child's name and date of birth
 - The name and address of every parent or carer who is known to the school, and which parent or carer the child normally lives with
 - The emergency contact details of the child's parent or carer
- 13.3. The following information about the school is recorded:
 - The school's name, address and telephone number
 - The school's certificate of registration
 - The name, address and telephone number of anyone who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with the children
- 13.4. A daily register of the names of the children being educated in the school, with their hours of attendance.

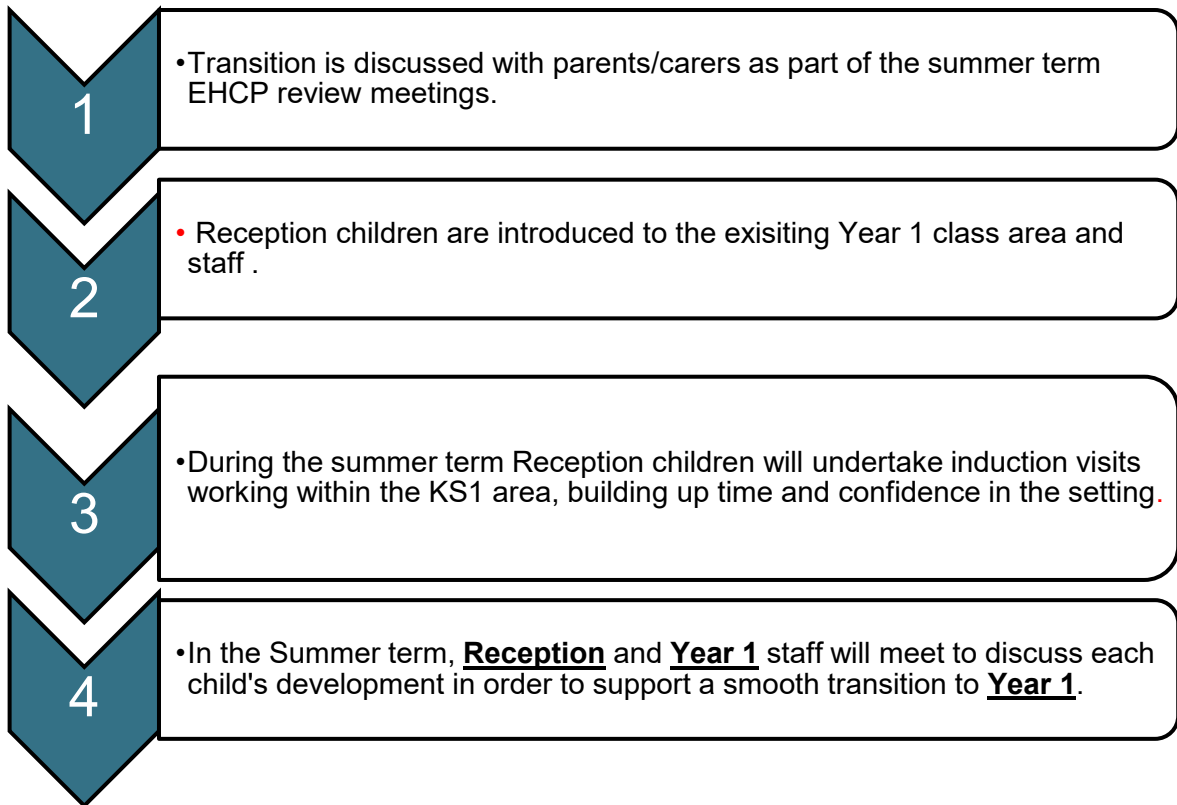
- 13.5. The following information is made available to parents/carers:
- The school's privacy notice for parents/carers and pupils
 - How the school delivers the EYFS and how parents/carers can access more information
 - How to access and contribute to their child's e-learning journal (Your Learning Journal).
 - The daily routine and the activities offered in the school's EYFS and how parents/carers can assist their child's learning at home
 - Details of the food menu for school dinners
 - Other relevant information relating to their own child.
- 13.6. Ofsted will be notified if there are any changes to the following:
- The address of the school
 - The school's contact details
 - The hours during which care is provided
 - Any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of the school or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with, children to look after children

14. Parental involvement

- 14.1. We firmly believe that the EYFS cannot function without the enduring support of parents/carers.
- 14.2. Parents/carers are invited to **termly** parents/carers meetings; however, the school has an open-door policy and parents/carers are welcome to talk to teachers at other time by arrangement.
- 14.3. Discussions with parents will be held in a setting that allows for confidentiality to be maintained and so that signing cannot be overseen.
- 14.4. Parents/carers are asked to sign permission slips at the start of the year covering any visits out of school, use of photographs/ videos of their child and using the internet at school.
- 14.5. Parents/carers are asked to complete admission forms, a medical form and to write a brief synopsis about their child to help the school to understand their character and personality.

15. Transition periods

15.1. The following process is in place to ensure children's successful transition to **Year 1**:



16. Monitoring and review

- 16.1. This policy is reviewed **bi-annually** by the **Governing Board** and the **Co-Headteachers**.
- 16.2. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.
- 16.3. All members of staff directly involved with the EYFS are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction.
- 16.4. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **March 2028**,