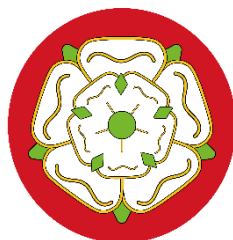


# Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum



**Information Booklet for  
New Parents and Carers**



# Welcome to Early Years:

## Our Intent:



At Heelands School we believe every child should be happy, secure, valued and confident. We value every child as a unique individual who can flourish and learn at their own pace and in their own individual way. The Early Years Foundation Stage is crucial in securing solid foundations that our children continue to build upon throughout their education. We

begin the year by looking at the individual needs of our children, taking into account their different starting points and prior experiences.

We aim to ignite the flame for learning by carefully planning our provision to ensure that it is suitable for the unique needs and stages of all our children, whilst being both engaging and challenging.

Our practice is led by the four guiding principles of the EYFS that shape our approach in Early Years:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and is 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.

The EYFS framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

# The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework:

The Early Years Foundation Stage divides children's learning and development into seven broad areas of learning:

## Three Prime Areas:

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

## Four Specific Areas:

- Literacy (Reading and Writing)
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

For each area of learning there are set early learning goals (ELGs). These indicate the level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS.

For children to achieve these early learning goals they are assessed by age related developmental milestones.



These describe the stages the children are likely to pass through as they move towards the achievement of each goal. We use the Early Learning Goals and development stages to help us track each child's progress and this enables us to provide next steps for learning.

# Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

Children need to have good self-esteem, confidence and motivation to be successful learners. They need to develop concentration and learn how to co-operate. We encourage the children to learn to play together, make friends, take turns, care for property and develop respect for themselves and others.

We encourage all children to follow the school vision:

**The Best You Can Be - Everyone, Every Day!**

The children will also be taught to consider the school values in their circle times and throughout the day:

- **Resilience** - We never give up and never give in. We use mistakes as a purposeful tool for learning and persist in problem solving.
- **Responsibly** - We are responsible for ourselves, each other and our environment.
- **Respect** - We show respect for everyone. We ask, 'would we like to be spoken to or about in that way?' and remind ourselves 'it's not just what you say, it's how you say it.'
- **Restorative** - We work best when part of a community and to do so we need an understanding of how a community works, self-awareness of our responsibilities to that community and shared communications skills.



The Best You Can Be - Everyone, Every Day





## Communication and Language:

In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking, listening and by hearing and responding to stories, songs and rhymes.

Through imaginative play, role-play and a language-rich environment, children will be encouraged to talk about what is happening in order to learn to express themselves effectively and become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary.



## Physical Development:

In Early Years we plan various activities, both indoors and outdoors, which help children to develop physical control, awareness of space and manipulative skills. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor skills are developed through a range of activities e.g. cutting and sticking in the creative area, threading beads, using construction equipment, playing with play dough. Wheeled vehicles help to develop pedalling skills while a supply of beanbags, balls and skittles develop aiming, throwing and catching skills. The children are introduced to gymnastics using small apparatus and dance in the main school hall. A positive attitude to a healthy and active way of life is also emphasised in lessons. PE lessons will start in the Autumn term.



# Literacy (Reading and Writing):

Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purposes of writing and, when they are ready, to use and draw written symbols for themselves.



We encourage the children to take pride in their work and we place importance on the teaching of Phonics and handwriting in Early Years so that good habits can be formed from the start. We would like to remind you that children should be encouraged to write in lower case rather than capital letters.

**Reading is the most important skill your child will learn at school** and we put an enormous amount of time and effort into helping your child to enjoy reading and to become a confident reader.

Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together.

Children need encouragement to read books and to listen to and enjoy stories. Please spend a little time each day sharing a bedtime book with your child so that they will learn that reading is fun.



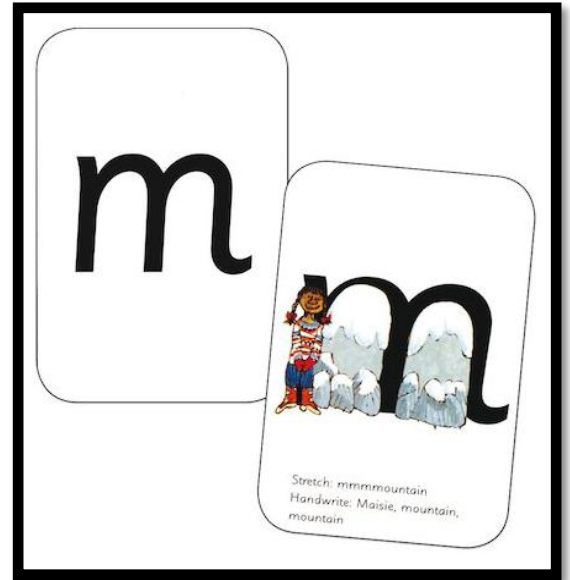


## Phonics



The teaching of letter sounds is the prime approach set out by the government to teach a child to read. We use a phonics scheme called [Read, Write, Inc.](#) to teach sounds in a systematic way. This has proved to be an excellent platform for the children to develop their reading and writing skills.

Every child will be given a Home School Communication Diary when they start school which will serve as a way of tracking your child's reading progress. We would ask you to write a positive comment in your child's diary every time you read together. We would like you to read with your child every day. Your child should bring their diary, sounds, words, or book to school every day. School books sent home are your responsibility and we would hope you will look after them carefully. The school may need to charge for lost books.



# Mathematics:

Children learn most effectively through first-hand practical experiences. We provide a range of activities to familiarise the children with sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing, pattern making and counting, forming the basis of early mathematics. The equipment used will encourage enquiry, observation and discussion using mathematical language.

We use a combination of mathematical resources to support children in developing their understanding of number and their problems solving skills. This includes the White Rose Hub Maths Approach which we follow throughout the school.

Through working with different objects and materials e.g. Numicon, sand, water, beads, counters, puzzles and number lines, children will learn to notice how things differ in shape, size and weight and will become familiar with number stories.



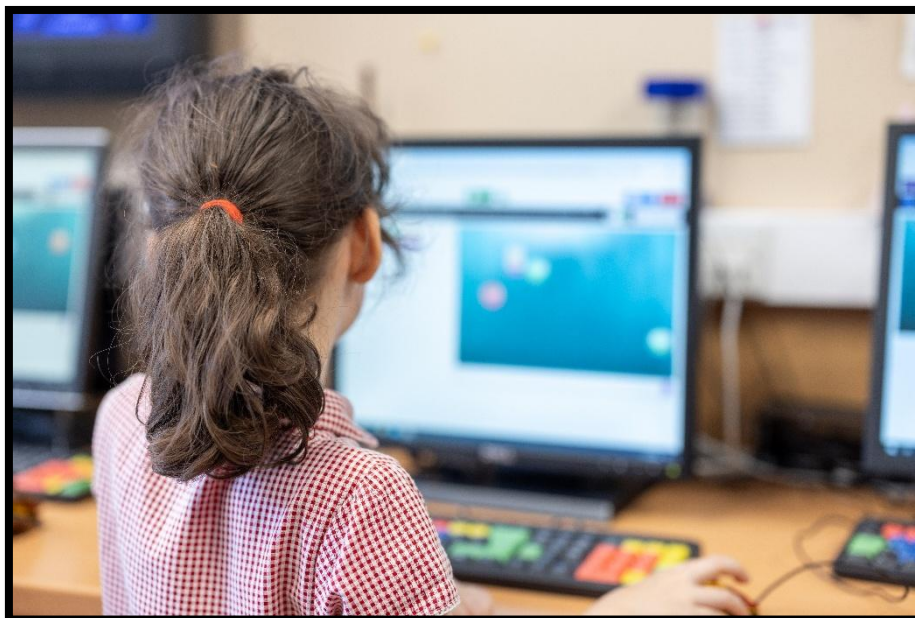


# Understanding the World:

Children are encouraged to find out about and make sense of their physical world and their community.

The children's range of personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters.

Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.



# Expressive Arts and Design:

This area of the Early Years curriculum focuses on the development of the child's imagination and their ability to express ideas and communicate feelings in creative ways. At Heelands we are committed to developing the creative arts. We place great emphasis on every child's individuality and creativity and this is encouraged through art, music, dance, stories and imaginative play.

## Implementation:

We believe that the teaching of these areas of learning should be practical, playful and inclusive, with support and challenge from the adults who respond to children's individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time.



Play is central to children's learning, providing opportunities for them to explore, develop their imagination, communicate with others and extend their language and thinking. Children can use their curiosity and imagination to help them make sense of the world around them in a secure, inviting and spacious environment. They practise skills, build up ideas and concepts, think creatively and imaginatively as they investigate and solve problems.

There is a combination of adult-led, teacher taught sessions as well as a wealth of stimulating continuous provision opportunities when adults scaffold learning through skilful interactions and questioning.



We also encourage the growth of social skills and empathy amongst the children. The relationships which the children develop with each other and with our staff are fundamental to their happiness and lay the best possible foundation for their future.

Throughout all of these areas of learning and at the heart of our EYFS are:

## Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:

An important part of Early Years is noticing how children learn. The ways in which a child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. These characteristics give children the skills that they will continue to draw upon throughout their development.

- **Playing and exploring – engagement**
  - Finding out and exploring
  - Playing with what they know
  - Being willing to 'have a go'
- **Active learning – motivation**
  - Being involved and concentrating
  - Keeping trying
  - Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- **Creating and thinking critically – thinking**
  - Having their own ideas
  - Making links
  - Choosing ways to do things





## Our Curriculum:

In Early Years we follow the statutory Early Years Foundation Framework explained above, supported by the non-statutory guidance Development Matters. We then build and develop our curriculum around this, ensuring all of the crucial skills, knowledge and vocabulary that we teach are presented to the children throughout the year. These encompass a range of topics, which are designed with their interests in mind and support children to develop their experience and knowledge across a range of themes.



Our learning environments, both inside and outside are adapted regularly to meet the different and developing needs of the children. We aim to ensure that these areas are always stimulating and exciting and that, importantly, they are accessible to and challenge all children, regardless of where they are on their developmental journey.

The environments are developed to promote independence within our children and allow them to access the curriculum independently and confidently with the necessary level of support and challenge.

### **Impact:**

By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage the majority will have reached their personal best and will have made significant personal progress across all areas of learning. For the EYFS Profile, we use our knowledge and professional judgement along with discussions with parents, carers and other adults to assess the children in line with the early learning goals, indicating if they have met the expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching the expected levels (emerging).

# Parents as Partners:

At Heelands School we believe the education of your child is a joint venture between parents/carers and staff. When we work together, the results have a positive impact on your child's development and learning.

We use Class Dojo, an online app, to communicate with parents and carers. Please take time to read these regular updates as they will help to keep you informed about the learning activities and experiences your child will be involved in. We also encourage families to post their own observations of their child on Class Dojo for us to share in school. This may be a family event, an autumn walk or a swimming achievement.

We also use Teachers 2 Parents to send texts and emails for communicating information to families.

We have a Facebook page that is regularly updated.

We hold parents' evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms when you will be invited to discuss your child's progress. However, there is no need to wait for these if you have questions or concerns. Your child's class teacher will always be willing to talk to you should you have any worries about your child's education or welfare.

A written report will be sent home in the Summer term detailing your child's achievements in relation to the Early Learning Goals.

