



HEARTS ACADEMY TRUST

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Reviewed November 2022

Next Review November 2025 (revised June 2023 with reference to Sun Safety) updated April 2024

HEARTS Academy Trust is committed to providing a happy, caring and safe learning environment for all within a values led context, where everyone feels valued and grows in confidence and independence.

We promote **HAPPINESS** through a creative, exciting and practical curriculum, which generates a love of, and interest in, learning and a resilience and hope which supports us through challenging times.

Great value is placed on pupils' self **ESTEEM** which is developed through a positive and motivated attitude to learning, a healthy lifestyle, good social skills, self-discipline and a positive self-image.

We promote the highest standards of **ACHIEVEMENT** in all areas of the curriculum and help all pupils to fulfil their potential regardless of gender, race or ability.

We foster **RESPECT and RESPONSIBILITY** for all by establishing good relations between the school, home and community. Pupils are taught respect for themselves, others and the environment. They are also taught to take full responsibility for their own choices and responsibility for themselves and their community.

We encourage **TRUTH** and honesty in all aspects of school life – relationships, work and the curriculum and learn to trust and accept others' individuality and uniqueness.

We develop **SPIRITUALITY and SERVICE** so that calm, quiet, reflective times which support deep thought are part of school life and beauty is appreciated. We promote a service culture that reflects our duty to support and show compassion to all members of the community and not just ourselves.



Children at the HEART

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers the development of children from birth to the end of the reception year. It recognises that early childhood is an important stage of life and has its own particular needs. The Foundation Stage acknowledges the many valuable skills children have developed and the importance of the role that parents play in this. Children learn best from first-hand experience and when learning is interrelated to help children to achieve their full potential.

The EYFS Curriculum includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These advocate that in planning children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways children learn and reflect this in their practice. The Characteristics of Effective learning are identified as:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate, experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying 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

Each setting catering for 2 and 3 year old's MUST be 80% full in order to be sustainable as an Early Years provision

Aims and Principles

The Early Years Foundation Stage at HEARTS intends to:

- Challenge children and set high expectations for learning behaviour
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum that includes a range of activities responsive to the needs of individuals and fosters learning across the seven areas set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework (2021)
- Provide a programme of activities and experiences in response to the assessment of individual children's needs and progress in order to meet the Development Matters (2021) outcomes
- Enable children to acquire the essential knowledge, skills and practical abilities to build upon their prior learning and prepare them for the next stage of their education
- Equip children with a strong foundation of phonetical and numerical understanding
- Provide children with a vocabulary rich curriculum
- Provide a secure, stimulating and challenging learning environment which encourages children to work and play independently
- Ensure all staff receive regular CPD to ensure they are up to date with the expectations of delivering the EYFS curriculum and safeguarding
- Establish effective partnerships with parents where they feel valued and able to contribute to and participate in school life
- Identify children with additional or special educational needs as early as possible and implement adjustments which ensure high expectations for their achievement
- Children with English as an additional language are given support to develop their language
- Develop the whole child, providing opportunities for them to form enquiring minds, be confident and to develop good learning behaviours and life skills
- Allow children to access a range of activities and trips linked to greater experiences as part of the 'HEARTS Promise'

Reception Class (Year R) Admissions

Children whose 4th birthday falls in the academic year - between the 1st September and 31st August - are admitted into reception classes from the autumn term of that year. Initially, children attend on a part-time basis; parents are informed of these sessions in the summer term prior to starting in September. All children and parents who have not attended our nursery/ pre-school provision will receive a home visit during this settling-in phase in order to support an effective transition into school. After the allocated staggered start, children will then attend on a full-time basis. There will be a wide range of opportunities to visit the school prior to attending as well as induction and parent meetings throughout their time at school.

Nursery and Pre-School Admissions

Children can join a HEARTS **pre-school** after their 2nd birthday. They can attend 3-hour sessions and we offer FEEE2 funded places. We offer 'morning' or 'afternoon' sessions. Room leads will organise with parents the sessions depending on the spaces available. All children will receive a home visit and will have opportunities throughout the term prior to their starting date, to visit their new setting. Children will not be admitted until a home visit has taken place.

Children can attend a HEARTS **nursery** setting after they turn 3 years. Funding is available the term after their 3rd birthday. (September, January and April). Parent Agreement Funding forms need to be completed termly in full, signed and adhered to. Sessions are organised with room leads depending on spaces available and parents' requests. We encourage nursery children to do a minimum of 15 hours. We offer 'morning' and 'afternoon' sessions and a number of full day places which includes lunchtime to support the 30-hour funding. All children who have not attended our pre-school settings will receive a home visit and will have opportunities throughout the term prior to their starting date, to visit their new setting. Children will not be admitted until a home visit has taken place.

Our pre-school and nursery settings follow our admissions and fee payments policies on the [HEARTS Academy Trust Policies](#) website page.

Sessions

Reception

The school day for children attending full time is agreed by the Head of School. Children are provided with a fruit snack. At lunchtime, children will receive a free school meal which are eaten in the main school hall. Children in reception can attend breakfast and after school clubs (where applicable) once children are in school full time and where their teachers deem them ready for this provision.

Nursery and pre-school

Morning session
Afternoon session
Full day provision

Our EYFS settings follow the HEARTS attendance policies on the [HEARTS Academy Trust Policies](#) website page.

The Curriculum

The HEARTS EYFS curriculum has been written by qualified practitioners across the trust. It is based around the seven areas of learning. These then lead into the 'Early Learning Goals' for children to achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage. We use direct instruction alongside purposeful and well-planned provision (360 learning) meaning our children know more and can do more.

The curriculum is divided into '**Prime**' and '**Specific**' areas. The prime areas lay vital foundations in the early years and support the development of life-long skills. The three **prime** areas: personal, social and emotional development (PSED), communication and language (CL), and physical development (PD), describe core aspects of early child development. The **specific** areas of learning cannot be developed alone, and rely on the skills gained in

the prime areas of learning. The **specific** areas of the curriculum are: literacy (L), mathematical development (MD), understanding the world (UW) and expressive arts and design (EAD).

Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development. (*Self-regulation, Managing Self, Building Relationships*) Children learn to be self-confident, co-operate and function in a group. They learn how to work and play with others. They develop personal and moral values. They are encouraged to be independent but to be able to recognise their needs and when they may need help, as well as beginning to understand the needs of others.

Physical development. (*Gross motor, Fine motor*) Children learn physical control, mobility and awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Positive attitudes towards a healthy and active way of life are developed. Fine motor skills are a huge part of our curriculum which supports the children's development to hold a pencil correctly.

Communication and Language (*Listening, Attention and Understanding, Speaking*) Children learn to speak confidently and clearly, enjoy stories, songs and poems, hearing and saying sounds and linking them to the alphabet. Children are encouraged to become confident speakers. Emphasis is placed on the importance of language and vocabulary.

Specific Areas

Literacy (*Comprehension, Word Reading, Writing*) Early reading is taught through a rigorous and sequential approach to systematic synthetic phonics. The programme of study we follow is HEARTS Phonics. The teaching of phonics happens every day from reception and through to year two. Children are taught to blend and segment through three daily group sessions of twenty minutes in reception and year one. They are also taught to read through individual reading sessions. Children are encouraged to read at home regularly to ensure that they make maximum progress. We provide many opportunities to foster a love of reading and introduce children to a wide range of literature. Children learn and recite stories, songs and rhymes as well as write for a range of purposes.

Mathematical Development (*Number, Numerical Patterns*) Children learn about number, shape, space and measure through direct teaching. They further develop their understanding of these mathematical concepts through stories, songs, rhymes, games, investigations and imaginative play.

Understanding the World (*Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities, The Natural World*) Children learn to question, enquire, and explore to discover more about the world around them. They explore past events in their own and their families' lives and also have the opportunity to find out about other cultures, religions and beliefs. These become a foundation for history, geography, science and technology when they enter key stage 1 at the end of EYFS.

Expressive Arts and Design (*Creating with Materials, Being Imaginative*) Children explore colours, materials, shapes and techniques as well as develop imaginative ideas, through dance and role play. Children are encouraged to tell stories and create music.

Learning Environment

We create a welcoming, well-organised and stimulating learning environment which provides children with opportunities for discovery and acquiring knowledge across the curriculum. Working walls are used to help children remember what they have been taught. Resources are clearly labelled and located in designated areas which are easily accessible for staff and children. Children are encouraged to handle equipment carefully and to tidy up. We aim to encourage independence and develop a sense of responsibility in all children.

All classes or shared areas within our EYFS settings throughout the year provide:

- A writing area containing various writing implements

- A classroom library containing a range of high-quality familiar and new texts including fiction, non-fiction and poetry
- Mathematical opportunities and resources which allow children to understand key concepts
- A creative area containing resources for a range of art, design and technology activities
- Construction opportunities containing resources for developing fine motor skills, social interaction and problem solving
- Small world play which allows children to extend fine motor skills, engage in imaginative play and develop language
- An area for sand, water and messy play, where children can engage in practical investigations
- A domestic role-play area as well as other role play opportunities linked to topics.
- A safe and secure outdoor learning space which acts as an extension to the indoor classroom.

Assessment

Before entry into our EYFS, practitioners consult with parents, during home visits, to discuss each child's needs. This also enables staff to make initial assessments of children before they start.

For children in the pre-school setting, staff will complete a 2-year check if it has not been completed before children join. Where necessary, this is completed in conjunction with member of the health team.

On entry into EYFS, children are assessed through adult led and child led activities. These activities support staff to assess children's individual starting points. This will also include our Communication and Language intervention programme baseline assessments. Children also complete the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) in the first few weeks of reception. Ongoing assessments are updated each half term through assessment of learning and observation.

Evidence of children's progress and achievement is collected through:

- Observations, both formal and informal- Online 'Tapestry' journals
- Discussions amongst practitioners
- Questioning and interaction with the child
- Focused activities/tasks
- Samples of work
- Talking to parents

During the summer term, all children in reception are assessed against the 'Early Learning Goals' within the EYFS Profile. By the end of EYFS, children are working towards reaching a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). This is defined as children who have achieved the expected level in the prime areas as well as the learning goals for literacy and mathematics. These assessments are statutory requirement where all outcomes are reported to the Local Authority. Outcomes are also analysed by school leaders so that strengths and areas for development can be identified and linked to school development plans. Moderation of outcomes and data take place at least termly as part of staff CPD. Internal moderations are carried out each half term in collaboration with other schools or leaders in the trust to ensure that accuracy is maintained. We also partake in moderation with other schools outside of the trust to quality-assure our judgements and share practice.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them as stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)

Children attending HEARTS EYFS settings are provided with a welcoming, safe, secure and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning.

We ensure that all necessary steps are taken to keep children safe and well including ensuring suitability of adults working alongside the children, maintaining correct policies, procedures and records, promotion of good health and positive behaviour management.

Safeguarding

Within each of our settings there is a designated safeguarding lead (DSL), deputy safeguarding lead (DDSL) and early years safeguarding lead (EYFS DSL). All staff have annual training on safeguarding and child protection.

HEARTS has a child protection policy that covers all of our settings.

Child Protection and Intimate Care policy can be found on the [HEARTS Academy Trust Policies](#) website page.

First aid

In the event of an accident, parents are informed via an 'accident slip or sticker' and a courtesy phone call if the child has received a bump to the head. There are qualified first aiders and paediatric first aiders on site who will log if treatment is given. At collection time this information will be shared with parents. Our named first aiders are displayed in each classroom.

Sun safety and treatment can be found in our Health and Safety policy on the [HEARTS Academy Trust Policies](#) website page.

Safety in the environment

Risk assessments on the outside and inside areas are reviewed annually and specific risk assessments are carried out should we leave the school premises or linked to specific risk in each setting. A daily risk assessment is also carried out to ensure that all of the indoor and outdoor provision is safe and meets safety requirements. Equipment is checked daily and appropriate measures are made to ensure children are safe at all times.

All staff are fully qualified and DBS checked. Staff ratios are fully met. All settings are overseen by a qualified teacher. Staff ratios follow the guidance outlined in EYFS statutory framework. Mobile phones are not permitted for use in the setting, during the school day

All staff are aware of fire exits and procedures. Records and assessments are confidential and all staff are aware of the importance of following GDPR guidelines. Personal phones or recording devices are not allowed in any of our EYFS settings.

Collection

All children have a minimum for 2 adults on record that have provided a photograph and password for our nursery/pre-school settings and passwords for our Reception settings, in order to collect at the end of the session.

Behaviour

We have high expectations of pupils and their behaviour in and around school as well as strategies for improving the behaviour of pupils who need support. Our values, known as "HEARTS values", and our mission statement underpin the behaviour of all (adults and children alike) in the school community.

Our EYFS settings follow the HEARTS behaviour policy on the [HEARTS Academy Trust Policies](#) website page.

At HEARTS we are aware that the early years of a child's education are vitally important in developing positive learning behaviours as well pro social behaviour. Adults working with these children model this behaviour explicitly. We start early to engineer success later.

Through a well-planned curriculum and positive adult interactions children have the opportunity to see and practise good behaviour and receive praise for good behaviour. Focus is given to the EYFS curriculum prime area of PSED, including self-regulation, managing self and building relationship.

Children are encouraged to recognise and understanding different emotions and feelings of themselves and others. They are taught about how to be a good friend and how to build positive relationships with others

Children are encouraged to develop their communication and language skills in order to be able to articulate their thoughts and feelings to build on being able to understand how to solve conflicts. Through adult led discussions and play, children are encouraged to understand the rules and why we have them. Children are encouraged to understand how to listen carefully and why listening is important.

These skills are the building blocks to a positive attitude, motivation and commitment to their learning.

Links with outside agencies

Staff, parents and children have links with various agencies to support children's needs.

These include:

- Educational psychologist
- Trust Speech and Language therapist
- Inclusion partners
- Health visitors
- Social workers
- Medical support e.g. occupational therapy, school nurse
- SEND Support Team