**Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy**

**Our Vision:**
**Nurture, curiosity, Growth**

Our whole school vision is **'Preparing Children for a Bright Future in a Changing World'.**
We believe that our Reception provision provides the best start for this, with a focused vision on promoting curiosity, nurture and growth
We provide children with well trained staff, a safe environment where getting to know each individual child is priority, which then enables them to feel comfortable and confident enough to grow in all areas - socially, personally and academically.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Heather Avenue Infant School, children join the EYFS in a Reception class in the academic year in which they turn five years of age. We follow the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (September 2025) and continually strive to provide:
The EYFS seeks to provide:
• Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
• A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
• Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
• Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, September 2025

Within the statutory EYFS framework are four guiding principles which shape our practice.
These are:
Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years. These are:

- 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 to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. (See "the characteristics of effective teaching and learning" at paragraph 1.18). The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

**A Unique Child**

We recognise children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

***Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)***

All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs, through discussion and guidance from the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns and progress are always discussed with parents and carers at every stage.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

**Welfare**

It is of paramount importance to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and help them to understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

At Heather Avenue Infant School we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the statutory framework for EYFS, as such we:

- Prioritise the welfare and safeguarding of all children, including ensuring all staff understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Training enables staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the

earliest opportunity, and to know how to respond to share their concerns with a designated safeguarding lead in a timely and appropriate way.

- Promote good health and healthy lifestyles, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a positive and nurturing manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs, including attachment difficulties.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so through rigorous safeguarding checks.
- Ensure the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure every child engages in suitably challenging learning and development experiences, tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to effectively meet the needs of the children.

**Positive Relationships**

At Heather Avenue Infant School, we recognise children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

**Parents and carers as Partners**

We recognise parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role parents and carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to Parents and carers about their child before their child starts in our school, carrying out home visits.
- Giving children the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions.
- Inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics.
- Encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There are formal meetings for parents and carers, three times a year at which the teacher and the child's parents or carers discuss the child's progress. Parents and carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Scheduling a range of activities throughout the year encouraging collaboration between child, school and Parents and carers: stay and play sessions, assemblies, school visits, mini-enterprise events, book events and PSHE focused events.
- Providing parents and carers an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by adding to their child's Tapestry learning journey and celebrating "wow" moments which inform planning and provision.

**Enabling Environments**

We aim to create a welcoming and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have regular daily access to both an indoor and outdoor

environment. Effective learning builds and extends upon children's prior learning and where possible, follows children's interests. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded on Tapestry and used to inform teacher assessment and knowledge of the children's stages of development.
Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

***Learning and Development***
Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.
Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving.

These are called the prime areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, and emotional development.

Four areas help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas.
These are called the specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Throughout their time in the Reception Year our children partake in an engaging curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of Reception year goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs) The descriptors for these can be found in Appendix 1.

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and carers and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. 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. However, if a child's progress in any area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

At Heather Avenue Infant School:
Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part of 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 supported by adults.

There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must 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.

As previously outlined our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow staff to respond quickly to children's new interests, stages of development and/or specific needs.

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum at Heather Avenue Infants are three Characteristics of Effective Learning.

• 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.

• Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

These elements underpin how we reflect on each child's development and adjust our practice accordingly. Supporting children in their individual learning behaviour and observing the context of children's play is essential.

Religious Education is also taught in the Reception classes in accordance with Norfolk County Council guidelines.

**Health and Safety**

At Heather Avenue Infant School, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS (see EYFS risk assessment)

At Heather Avenue Infant School we undertake;

- A whole school 'Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy' ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon to keep children safe.
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area to provide healthy snacks and drinks.
- A well stocked first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy with regular drills
- Personal mobile phones and cameras are strictly **not** to be used in classrooms or areas where children are present and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. School tablets and cameras that are used in class must not be used for staff own personal use. (Lockers are available in the school office for personal mobile phones)

- E-Safety/photo policy to gain parent- carer consent for use of Internet and photographs.
- An agreement to the use of Tapestry for each child and that no photographs (taken using Tapestry) will be placed on school social media without express parental consent.

**Transitions**

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides Parents and carers and staff with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development ('expected') or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of their new children's Profile report together with a written report on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning and areas of learning and the child's learning journal (Tapestry profile). This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1. All assessment information is recorded on Classroom Monitor, our whole school assessment system.

**Appendix 1 – Early Learning Goal Descriptors**

Communication and Language

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.

• Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.

• Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

ELG: Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.

• Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.

• Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

ELG: Self-Regulation

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.

• Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.

• Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.

• Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.

• Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

ELG: Building Relationships

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.

• Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.

• Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Physical Development

ELG: Gross Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.
• Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.
• Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

ELG: Fine Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
• Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery.
• Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy

ELG: Comprehension

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
• Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories.
• Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

ELG: Word Reading

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
• Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
• Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

ELG: Writing

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
• Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
• Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Mathematics

ELG: Number

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Have a deep understanding of numbers to 10, including the composition of each number.
• Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.
• Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

ELG: Numerical Patterns

Children at the expected level of development will:

• Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.
• Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.

• Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the World

ELG: Past and Present
Children at the expected level of development will:
• Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.
• Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
• Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.
ELG: People, Culture and Communities
Children at the expected level of development will:
• Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
• Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
• Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.
ELG: The Natural World
Children at the expected level of development will:
• Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
• Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
• Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive Arts and Design

ELG: Creating with Materials
Children at the expected level of development will:
• Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
• Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.
• Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.
ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive
Children at the expected level of development will:
• Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.
• Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs.
• Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.