



HEATHSIDE SCHOOL
HAMPSTEAD

EYFS Policy

Introduction - INTENT

At Heathside School, we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021). We value each child's starting point and create an environment where learning is purposeful, enjoyable and celebrated.

Heathside School's aims are:

- Outstanding outcomes for children and young people.
- Confident, responsible, independent and resilient young citizens.
- A vigilant culture of safety and wellbeing – to ensure that children are happy and thrive.
- To develop a Centre of Excellence for outstanding teaching.

In our Early Years we create a safe, happy and inclusive environment that aims to develop children's resourcefulness, knowledge, confidence and independence. Through a broad and balanced curriculum, we carefully consider children's interests, needs, and enthusiasms. We nurture children's wellbeing and love of learning. Each child is supported to reach their full potential regardless of their background, nationality, gender or ability.

At Heathside School our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) consists of:

- A nursery class for children aged 2 to 3: *Cygnets*
- A pre-reception class for children aged 3 to 4: *Swans*
- A reception class for children aged 4 to 5: *Barn Owls*

The Early Years Foundation Stage - IMPLEMENT

The EYFS is based on 4 principles:

I. A Unique Child

We recognize every child is a competent learner ready to learn in an individual way and at their own pace. Each child at our school is considered an active learner with an unlimited scope of development and learning. We support children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusive Practice

The school has an international character where wellbeing and respect for different people, cultures and ideas are upheld as key values.

All children and their diverse needs are equally valued. We consider diversity of needs, interests, background and experience in all areas of the school. We work to promote individual talents, interests and skills by observing strengths, talking to parents and sharing observations to enhance and promote successes. We encourage high levels of motivation and set realistic but challenging expectations. Heathside is a multicultural school. We value the many languages children speak in addition to English. Many children are also well travelled from an early age. We commemorate

special events in different cultures in class and celebrate different cultural festivals throughout the year. Children in EYFS also have specialist Spanish lessons.

We meet the varying needs of children through:

Planning opportunities that build on children's knowledge and experiences.

Using a balance of **adult-led and child-led learning**, following children's interests through **focus weeks** and linking to key curriculum areas such as **phonics (Anima Phonics), maths (White Rose Maths), and Drawing Club** stories and topics.

Using a range of teaching and learning strategies based on children's needs, in Pre-Reception and Reception to extend learning through teachable moments.

Embedding **High Performance Learning (HPL)** in EYFS by encouraging children to be curious, resilient, reflective, and collaborative, helping them to develop the skills and attitudes that underpin lifelong learning.

Placing a strong focus on **reading and stories**, enhanced through **systematic phonics teaching** and **Drawing Club**, to develop children's language, imagination, and early literacy skills.

Providing a stimulating environment that motivates learning and values the contribution of every child.

Using resources that reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.

Valuing the local community of Hampstead and Hampstead Heath as rich sources of learning opportunities, nurturing children's appreciation of nature, and developing their knowledge of plants, habitats, animals, and birds that live on the Heath.

Embedding our school ethos of "**Nature, Knowledge, Nurture**" across the curriculum.

Using displays, resources, and role-play areas that reflect the community in which the children live.

Providing activities relating to a wide range of religious, ethnic, and cultural celebrations.

Planning challenging activities that match children's developmental levels.

Monitoring children's progress carefully and taking appropriate action to support as necessary, in line with the school SEND policy.

Keeping Safe

We teach children about boundaries, rules and limits and support them to understand why they exist. Children are enabled to explore their school environment and take safe risks within appropriate limits. The children learn how to recognise and manage risk within a safe environment.

Related school policies include: Safeguarding, Child Protection, Health and Safety, Risk Assessments, Uncollected Children, and Lost Children.

Health and Wellbeing

Heathside School is a 'nut-free' and 'sesame-seed' free environment.

Children's medical and dietary needs are made known to the school prior to a child starting and this information is known to staff on iSAMS (CRM).

At morning snack time, children bring in a healthy snack. Children are encouraged to eat snacks which promote healthy teeth such as fresh fruit, vegetables, yoghurts and cheese; water is also available to the children at all times throughout the day.

Children can either bring in their own nut-free and sesame-free lunch from home or can opt for a hot lunch option from the school caterer; parents place orders online using our Firefly parent portal. We encourage parents to opt for the healthy hot lunch option provided by Accent, menus are made available to families at the start of each term using our *Firefly* parent portal.

Accent caterers and serving staff have received allergen training and allergens are on display for the children to read. We encourage children to read the menu where possible and take ownership of their allergens from a young age; this is always supervised by an adult as an additional safeguard. Early Years staff are also required to complete training on food hygiene.

As of 2021, it became compulsory to promote good oral health, as well as good health in general so we educate the children on the effects of eating too many sweet things and regularly discuss the importance of brushing teeth.

Parents/Carers are advised to provide children with sun hats and sunscreen during the summer months. Parents/Carers must sign consent forms if they would like staff members to apply sunscreen for children in the Early Years. Early Years staff keep a small supply of sun hats for any children who do not have their own sun hat.

Outdoor play areas provide shaded areas and teachers advise children when to stay in the shade.

We ensure that the premises, environment and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.

Records, policies and procedures are maintained as required for the safe and efficient management of the school.

Related school policies: First Aid Policy, Medicine Policy, Accident and Incident Policy, Intimate Care Policy, Safer Recruitment Policy, Complaints Policy, Health and Safety Policy

The school sends out regular guidance on recommendations for food and food preparation.

Welfare and Safeguarding

Fundamental British Values

Heathside is committed to incorporating and promoting Fundamental British Values within our teaching and the children's learning experiences.

- We take turns and share
- We are polite.
- We learn about the world around us.
- We practise our table manners.
- We follow rules.
- We visit places in our local community.

Prevent Duty

All staff at Heathside annually undertake training regarding the Prevent Duty and are aware of procedures that need to take place as necessary. The aim of the Prevent Duty is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people being drawn into terrorism. We are required to take a risk-based approach to the Prevent Duty, under paragraph 14 of the Home Office's statutory guidance. Heathside conducts an annual Prevent Duty Risk Assessment to ensure it stays current with the evolving risks in school, the local area, nationally and online.

Related School Policies: Safeguarding, Child Protection, E-Safety (and Acceptable Use) Policy

2. Positive Relationships

We support children to become strong and independent learners. We value highly the strong collaborative and reciprocal relationships developed between the school, child and the family. We value parent involvement within the school and encourage parents to take an active role whilst their child is in our care. For example, photographs from home and examples of WOW! Moments. Communication in the reading records, library reading, talks and workshops run by parents, and Forest School. Parent contributions to their child's learning journey folder.

Partnership with Parents

At Heathside School we have strong partnerships with parents. We particularly promote and encourage parent involvement in activities, sharing their skills and talents with the children.

Successful parent partnerships are built through:

- School tours for prospective parents either in person (or by virtual online meeting)
- Taster sessions for children to visit the school prior to their start at Heathside; this also forms the basis of our informal assessment as part of the admissions process.
- Parents complete induction forms.
- Weekly school newsletters keep parents informed of the life of the school. Class teachers are available at the start and end of each session for informal discussions and for parents to ask any questions.
- Written communication with the class teacher and the school is available through school emails.
- Parent-Teacher meetings are held each term.
- A written report is given to parents at the end of each academic year for children in the nursery groups; this report contains areas of achievement over the academic year and “next steps”.
- A written report is given to parents in Reception at the end of each term; this report contains areas of achievement over the term and “next steps”.
- Parents and teachers communicate via the school email system.
- In Reception, parents communicate through the reading diary regarding their child’s reading progress.
- Parents can see and comment on Tapestry observations and upload their own observations from home.
- Staff complete a verbal handover with parents/ carers at the end of each school day.

Heathside holds a range of events throughout the year enabling collaboration between parents, staff and the school community

Key Person

We have a diverse and experienced workforce who support the children to achieve their potential, whilst demonstrating sensitivity to children's individual concerns and interests.

The Cygnets are led by one main key worker and supported by a dedicated Teaching Support Assistant (TSA) throughout the day. Key workers and TSAs strive to bond with all the children to encourage confidence and independence, as well as providing continuity.

The Swans are supported by one main key worker and a dedicated TSA, which allows regular opportunities for group and individual learning.

The Reception Owls class has a dedicated class teacher working with 15 children per class (max).

We always ensure staffing meets ratio requirements set out by the *Department for Education (DfE)*.

Supporting Learning

Staff work closely with the school SENCO in supporting learning and providing additional provision as appropriate. We value the importance of early identification of children with additional needs in order to give the support they require.

Related school policy: SEND Policy.

We aim to provide a smooth transition for children throughout the EYFS and into Year 1. A smooth transition is supported by:

- Effective communication between class teachers.
- Transition meetings between relevant staff before the start of each academic year to share information about each child's learning and development.
- Visits to their new classrooms in the Summer Term.
- Home visits for pupils starting at Heathside in Reception.
- When children enter the school, parents are encouraged to complete an 'All About Me' questionnaire to support transition and inform planning.

3. Enabling Environments

The school environment plays a key role in supporting and extending a child's development. Heathside offers a diverse and imaginative learning environment with stimulating indoor and outdoor learning opportunities, engaging children's knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions.

IMPACT - Observation, Planning and Assessment

A range of methods are adopted to record children's progress in different learning contexts, both adult-led and child-initiated. Observations of children include short and anecdotal observations, photographs, video recording and samples of children's work. This provides an ongoing assessment tool, giving a picture of the developing child whilst also monitoring achievement. Observations demonstrate children's abilities, needs, interests, and play schemas. Interactions are made between adults and children to extend knowledge and understanding, looking out for "teachable moments". Observations are evaluated instantly and ongoing learning opportunities are planned to support children to continue to make the next steps and progress.

The Curriculum is planned around observations of children, their strengths, interests and needs, as well as the teachers' understanding of what necessary knowledge and skills will help each child to achieve their objectives. Indoor and outdoor play-based activities encourage child-initiated as well as adult-led activities. This is supported by the Birth to Five Matters non-statutory guidance (Early Years Coalition)

The Pre-Reception classes plan using a weekly story of the week with interconnecting songs. Activities in all seven areas are planned around the story with a particular focus on the prime areas.

Specialist lessons include PE, Creative Movement, Spanish, Music, and Heath School (from Pre-Reception).

A baseline assessment is completed within the first three weeks of the academic year for children in the Reception class; this assessment is recorded using Quest.

We have 'Focus Children' on rotation each half-term. This provides observational evidence and assessment against age related expectations and evidence towards the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP).

Tapestry is used to make observations each day and also used to monitor and track the progress of children each half term. Data is used to assess the learning needs of key groups of learners. Raising Attainment, monitors and tracks all pupils, through challenge and support, to ensure they achieve their full potential.

At the end of the year, Quest is used in Reception to provide a summary of each child's progress and attainment in all 7 areas of learning and to complete the EYFSP. The Profile indicates whether children are meeting the expected levels of development or working towards them (emerging). This information is communicated to parents in the first instance and then to Year 1 teachers to aid a seamless transition to KS1.

The Progress Check at 2 years is completed for children in Cygnets and gives a clear picture of individual children's development. A short-written summary of each child's development in the prime areas is shared with parents. The progress check is formulated from ongoing assessment and observations, describing strengths, areas for development and identifying significant emerging concerns where the SENCO would be notified.

The Learning Environment

The Early Years classrooms are arranged with defined areas to provide children with experiences and activities in all areas of learning. Areas of the classroom include role play, construction, creative area, and small world - Literacy and Numeracy are represented in all of these different areas as well as discreetly. Activities are planned to meet the needs and interests of children. We aim to make learning as active and practical as possible and recognise the importance of play.

The outdoors is an important aspect at Heathside. We value the opportunity to play outside in all weather throughout the year and children have access to play outdoors every day.

Children in Swans and Barn Owls also visit Hampstead Heath three times a week, for Heath School lessons.

Reception and Pre-Reception Children take part in school trips over the course of the school year.

We also have a range of visiting speakers that come into school to discuss different topics with the children such as dentists, fire fighters, doctors, etc.

Parent readers are regularly invited into school to read stories with each Early Years class.

4. Learning and Development

We value all areas of learning and aim to provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum. The seven areas of learning and development are divided into three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas.

The Prime Areas are:

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

The Specific Areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The characteristics of effective learning in the Prime and Specific areas are interconnected as follows:

- Playing and Exploring – Children investigate and experience things and “have a go.”
- Active Learning – Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties. They enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically – Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Play and Exploration

The EYFS at Heathside has a play-based approach to learning and development. Well-planned and purposeful play, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. Through play, children explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. They develop thinking skills, independence and self-discipline. Children have opportunities to be creative, experiment and test ideas.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning opportunities ensure children develop physically, linguistically, intellectually and emotionally. It builds on what children already know and can do and inspires a confident disposition to learning through meaningful, imaginative, challenging and enjoyable experiences. We value the development of the whole child and children at Heathside are highly resilient.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Extra-Curricular clubs are provided to further children’s development.

