



HEARTS ACADEMY TRUST

Foundation Stage Policy

Reviewed and updated: June 2019

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

Foundation Stage Policy (non PVI)

The Foundation Stage covers the development of children from the age of two /three 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 learning is inter-related to help children to achieve their full potential.

The Foundation Stage Policy should be read in conjunction with all other policy documents in the school.

Safeguarding

Children are provided with a safe, welcoming and secure environment in which they are unable to leave unless supervised. Risk assessments on the outside/ inside areas are reviewed regularly and specific risk assessments are carried out should we leave the school premises. A daily risk assessment is also carried out to ensure that our outdoor area is safe to play in. Equipment is checked daily and appropriate measures are made to ensure children are safe at all times.

In the event of an accident, parents are informed by the class teacher and head bumps are informed with an additional sticker and on occasions a courtesy phone.¹

Please see the asthma policy for further information regarding asthma.

There are qualified first aiders and pediatric first aiders on site. Our named first aiders are displayed in each classroom and the main school areas.

All staff are fully qualified and DBS checked. Staff ratios are fully met. *In the Nursery there is a teacher overseeing the setting and a room lead Nursery Nurse.²* In Reception there are qualified teachers and LSA's. All staff are aware of fire exits and procedures and safeguarding procedures for entering the pre school.

Records and assessments are confidential and all staff are aware of the importance of confidentiality.

Aims and Principles

The Foundation Stage at HEARTS intends to:

- Challenge children and set high expectations for learning.
- Present the children with a structured plan of activities which is responsive to the needs of individuals, fostering learning across the seven areas set out in the Early Years Framework for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum within the framework of the EYFS and to help pupils acquire knowledge, skills and practical abilities and the will to use them.
- Provide a secure, stimulating and challenging learning environment which encourages children to work and play independently.
- Develop each child's knowledge, skills and enjoyment in all areas of experience, building on prior learning.
- Plan activities and experiences in response to the assessment of individual children's progress.

- Establish good partnerships with parents and carers, where they feel valued and able to contribute to and participate in school life.
- Ensure that children with special needs are identified early and appropriate arrangements are made for them.
- Children with English as an additional language are given support to develop their language through participating in group and individual play based language activities.
- Develop the whole child, providing opportunities for them to form enquiring minds, be confident and to develop good working habits and life skills.

We aim to provide:

- An atmosphere in which every child and adult feels secure, valued and confident.
- A learning environment in which the child is at the centre of the learning.
- An intentional curriculum, which is broad, balanced, relevant and appropriate to the social, emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual development of individual children, including those with special educational needs.
- A curriculum that is delivered through structured play, building on what children already know and can do.
- A plan of activities and experiences in response to the assessment of individual children's needs and progress in order to meet every child's needs linked to the EYFS outcomes and the characteristics of learning.
- Opportunities for first-hand experiences, and learning that is inter-related in order to develop independence and resilience.
- Learning both inside and outdoors to allow children to develop broad skills and resilience.

Roles and Responsibilities

Early Years Leader/ lead teacher (most experienced teacher)

- Monitor the quality and the appropriateness of provision in the Foundation Stage.
- Monitor planning and practice within the Foundation stage team.
- Identify and implement areas for development.
- Identify staff training needs and implement appropriate training.
- Communicate with the Senior Management Team.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the Foundation Stage policy and induction procedures.
- Attend local authority courses for early year's co-ordinators and liaise with Early Years advisors.
- Regularly analyse and set targets for data each half term in line with the trust assessment expectations.

Foundation Stage teachers

- Plan, provide and deliver the new HEART's curriculum based on the needs of the children.
- Regularly review planning and assessment procedures.
- Continually strive to improve quality and provision within the Foundation Stage.
- Work with the school SENCO in the early identification of children with special needs and/or EAL
- *Use the online 'Learning Journey' as a record of assessment for each individual, maintaining the high standard already in place.³*

- Establish and maintain a positive relationship with parents and carers.
- Communicate with parents on children's progress through regular discussion, including parents' evenings using the online 'Learning Journey' as a basis for discussion.
- Monitor and record progress of those children with special educational and welfare needs and document appropriately.
- Ensure that the provision, books and classrooms are neat and tidy at all times.
- Experienced teachers to support and mentor students.

Nursery Nurse and support staff.

- Work in close co-operation with and under the supervision of teachers to provide and maintain an environment where all children are secure and learning may take place.
- Have full involvement in, and initiate where appropriate, a range of activities and play situations.
- Assist with planning, observations and assessment.
- Plan and implement, alongside the teacher, intervention activities for identified children.
- Undertake appropriate training to improve knowledge and skills within the Early Years environment.
- Ensure that books, provision and classrooms are neat and tidy at all times.
- Nursery Nurse to oversee the outdoor provision - prepare/order resources, monitor risk assessments.
- Nursery nurse to mentor/ support students and volunteers.

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 Class from the autumn term of that year. Initially children attend a two week induction on a part-time basis; parents are informed of these sessions in the summer term prior to starting in September. Parents and children new to the school will have had a range of opportunities to visit the school and attend induction meetings. All children attend on a full time basis by mid-September. All children joining the school will receive a home visit in order to settle and gain a thorough picture of the child.

The school day for children attending full time is agreed by the Head of School.

Children are provided with fruit, milk and water free of charge.

At lunchtime children will receive a free hot school dinner. Lunches are eaten in the main school hall.

Pre-school / Nursery Admissions⁴

The Pre-School offers provision for 2 to 3-year olds and depending on the setting children are allocated a morning or afternoon place. Our Nursery provision offers places for children the year before starting school.

Morning sessions are offered to children after their 2nd birthday. Children move to the afternoon sessions the September after they are 3 in preparation for schools the following September.

All Pre-school/Nursery children will receive a home visit and will have opportunities, throughout the summer term prior to their starting date, to visit their new setting.

The children are provided with a healthy snack, consisting of fruit, vegetables, carbohydrate, protein, milk and water free of charge.

30 hours funding

Children eligible for the 30 hours funding are able to stay for both the morning and afternoon sessions. These children are required to bring a packed lunch in with them. This session runs from 9am – 3.30 pm. 30 hour children benefit from additional activities and sessions with the main school.

Fees

Fees are charged for children who are not eligible for the 2-year old funding. These fees will need to be paid weekly on a Monday ahead of the coming week. Please note that fees remain payable during periods of non-attendance in order for us to provide a high quality provision.

The Curriculum

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage has been written by qualified practitioners from across the HEARTS Academy Trust.

It is based around seven broad areas of learning in which there are 'Early Learning Goals' for children to strive towards by the end of the Foundation Stage.

The areas of learning are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

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 the needs of others.

Physical development.

Children learn physical control, mobility, 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 and children are given oral strategies to help them to hold a pencil correctly.

Communication and Language

Children learn to speak confidently and clearly, enjoy stories, songs and poems, hearing and saying sounds, and linking them to the alphabet. Jolly Phonics is taught in conjunction with Letters and Sounds. Children are encouraged to become confident speakers with much emphasis being placed on the importance of language.

Literacy

Children learn to read by using segmenting and blending skills. This is largely done orally but then moves on to the application of taught strategies to simple words and sentences. Children are taught to read through guided reading and individual reading sessions. Children are encouraged to read at home to ensure that they make maximum progress.

Mathematical Development.

Children develop an understanding of mathematical concepts through stories, songs, rhymes, games, investigations and imaginative play.

Children work with number, measures, shape and space through practical activities and experiences.

Understanding the World.

Children have the opportunity to find out about the world around them. They have different materials to work and play with, and learn about everyday technology and what it is used for. They find out about past events in their lives and their families lives and also have the opportunity to find out about other cultures and beliefs. These become a foundation for history, geography, science and technology.

Expressive Arts and Design

Children have the opportunity to explore colours and shapes and develop imaginative ideas, through dance and role play. Children are encouraged to tell stories and create music.

The curriculum has been written by qualified practitioners from across the HEARTS Academy Trust.

The Learning Context.

We aim to create a welcoming, well-organised, stimulating learning environment which provides children with opportunities for discovery across the curriculum. Resources are clearly labelled and located in designated areas. They are easily accessible for staff and children. Pupils are encouraged to handle equipment carefully and to help with tidying up. We aim to encourage independence and develop a sense of responsibility in the children.

Areas are designated within the classroom and shared areas to maximise learning opportunities. All classes or shared areas in Nursery and Reception should have:-

- A writing area containing various writing implements and papers as well as envelopes, word banks and dictionaries
- A book area containing a range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry and class-made books
- A mathematical table or area which allows children to select appropriate items to help them solve practical problems
- An art/creative area containing resources for a range of art, design and technology activities
- A construction area containing resources for developing fine motor skills, social interaction and problem solving
- A small world area 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 role-play area which should be developed alongside topics
- A stillness and reflection area to offer a space for stillness and quiet time

Outdoor Play

Nursery and Reception

All children have access to an outdoor play area. It is fully enclosed and provides a safe place, which acts as an extension to the indoor classroom. In addition, activities are provided to develop, enhance and extend physical and social skills. All reception children take part in outdoor learning lessons on the school site and in the local park.

Staff Development

Teaching staff attend regular whole school/ Trust Inset meetings. In addition, all practitioners have access to online courses each year. As part of the EYFS network Foundation stage practitioners meet on an informal basis once a term to discuss relevant issues, share good practice and ideas. Foundation

Stage practitioners have worked very hard to establish good relationships with our local schools/nurseries and regularly visit other settings to share good practice.

*Phase meetings are carried out regularly and all Foundation Stage staff are expected to attend to discuss matters of relevance.*⁷ Weekly year group meetings are held by lead teachers to discuss planning, assessments and year group provision.

All new staff are provided with training upon their induction, including First Aid and Safeguarding. Staff have access to training through CPD from Essex County Council, Educare and in-house twilight sessions.

Assessment

For whole school aspects of assessment, recording and reporting, please refer to the school policy on assessment.

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

On entry into the Nursery and Reception, children are assessed within the first 3 weeks, using the HEARTS base-line assessment for Foundation Stage.

Formative, ongoing assessment, makes up the vast majority of early years assessment. This is done through adult interaction and feedback during play and guided activity. The Trust marking policy is used to provide information about attainment and next steps for literacy and maths.

Tapestry is used as to track children's achievements and progress; this is vital when making judgements about individual's attainment.

Summative assessment takes place based on children's achievements and directed work with adults at the end of each half term. Judgements are made through observations and working directly on assessment based tasks with children. Half-termly moderation meetings across the Trust consolidate judgements.

Summative assessment is recorded using Scholarpack and this data is used to set targets, identify key groups and interventions for the next period of time.

During the summer term children in Reception are assessed against the Foundation Stage Profile, which is a statutory requirement and their results reported to the borough. Assessment for this takes place through teacher judgement, knowledge of children, evidence of children's attainment and skill. We moderate these judgement's as a Trust and through the Early Years Cluster meetings. Early Years data is moderated in line with Essex expectations, on average every 2-3 years or when there is a newly qualified teacher in the team. These results are then analysed by the Early Years Phase Leaders so that strengths and areas for development can be identified and linked to school development plans.

Observation and Assessment

Assessment and record keeping, informed by careful observations and focused activities, enables staff to plan a curriculum that will meet the needs of individuals and ensure effective continuity and progression. Observations and assessments are built into the timetable and planning process. All members of the Nursery and Reception teams are involved in the observation and assessment process.

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

- Observations, both formal and informal- Online 'Tapestry' journals
- Discussions amongst practitioners.
- Questioning and interaction
- Focused activities/tasks
- Samples of work
- Talking to parents and parent input onto Tapestry.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Reception teachers meet weekly during PPA to monitor and moderate progress.

The Foundation Stage Leader carries out monitoring of the curriculum through the review of medium and short-term plans. Findings are shared with the Headteacher.

Monitoring through lesson observations is carried out by The Foundation Stage Leader, members of the Senior Management Team and Curriculum Leaders, giving the opportunity to ensure curriculum coverage and continuity and progression for all pupils, including high achievers and pupils with special needs.

The Foundation Stage leader regularly models and team teaches to ensure that teaching is consistently good in all areas.

Additional adults are encouraged to take part in peer observations alongside the Foundation Stage leader so that they can expand and strengthen their skills, ensuring the best possible support for the children.

Links with outside Agencies

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

These include – Speech therapy

Educational psychologist

Health Visitors

Social Workers

Medical support e.g. occupational therapy, school nurse

SEN Support Team

Children's Centres

FIG

Appendix 1 – Wickford Church of England School

- 1)** Bumps are informed verbally and recorded in the school accident book – letters are sent to parents whose child has a bumped head and where necessary parents are informed via a phone call.
- 2)** Staffing – the nursery is led by L3 nursery nurse and supported by other nursery nurses. The setting is overseen by the EYFS leader.
- 3)** Nursery nurses and support staff have the same responsibility to record evidence on Tapestry.
- 4)** Children are admitted after their 2nd or 3rd birthday in line with funding and place availability. New children are welcomed throughout the year if places are available.
- 5)** The morning session for 2-3 year olds and the afternoon session is for 3-4 year olds in the year before beginning school. Snack consists of a choice of water or milk and a healthy snack.
- 6)** The outdoor area for the pre-school/ nursery is self-contained although there are times when they have access to the full school facilities. Including phase time where the nursery children spend time in the reception classes on a Friday afternoon.
- 7)** Full phase meetings are half termly. Team meetings for Reception and the Nursery are weekly.