Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum Statement

Intent, Implementation and Impact

Intent:

At Heage Primary School, we pride ourselves on having ambition for all. We aim to ensure that each child has a happy and positive start to their school life in which they can build the foundations for a love of learning.

Communication and Language and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) are at the heart of the curriculum, where pupils, especially those who are from disadvantaged backgrounds, can build on new vocabulary learnt and embed this through carefully planned interactions and provocations. Disadvantaged pupils are prioritised in adult interactions, targeted interventions, and ongoing assessment to ensure gaps close rapidly.

Our curriculum is rooted in a child-centred, inclusive approach where every child is valued and supported, and we aim to work collaboratively with parents and carers to encourage confident, independent, enthusiastic learners who are inspired to thrive and reach their full potential. We recognise children's prior learning, from their experiences at home and any previous early years settings, and we strive to ensure that everyone reaches their full potential from their various starting points. The curriculum has been built to think about what comes before and after the learning that takes place in each year group and utilises the whole school progression maps, knowledge of child development and the Development Matters document to create a broad and balanced curriculum that provides the experiences and cultural capital needed by our children to broaden their understanding of the world.

Our EYFS is an inviting, safe, calm and stimulating learning environment where children have opportunities to learn through play by initiating their own ideas within the continuous provision indoors and outdoors and through adult support, scaffolding and modelling. We provide a rich and nurturing environment that celebrates individuality, follows children's interests, embraces diversity and encourages curiosity through purposeful play and meaningful learning experiences. By ensuring that there is a balance of child-led and adult-directed activities, supported by high-quality interactive engagement, we aim to inspire and engage children in their learning and to help them develop the attitudes and knowledge that they need to thrive. Adaptive teaching, targeted interventions and close partnership with families ensure that pupils with SEND and disadvantaged children are supported to access the full curriculum and achieve ambitious outcomes.

By the end of the Reception year, our intent is to ensure that all children make at least good progress from their starting points, equipping them with the skills and broad range of knowledge needed to give them a solid foundation and enable a smooth, structured transition into Year 1, and for future progress through school and life.

Implementation:

Children take part in sequenced and progressive learning experiences daily and are taught individually, in small groups, and in whole class. Through a combination of adult-directed

input and child-initiated continuous provision opportunities, learning is planned and facilitated through a range of effective interaction strategies that support learning and encourage children to develop their learning independently through exploration and challenge in both inside and outside areas of the classroom. Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in active, meaningful play and exploration and to engage in varied, rich experiences and provocations, which are carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision.

Each half term, we introduce a new theme with high-quality texts and opportunities to provide inspiration for learning, whilst affording the flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas. These themes are chosen to support children to think about themselves and how they interact with the wider world, enabling them to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others, to form positive relationships, develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings.

The structure of the timetable changes throughout the year to take into account the changing needs of the children, increasing the amount of time that children are focused on adult-directed learning and helping to prepare them for transition to Key Stage 1.

The curriculum at Heage has a strong emphasis on the three Prime Areas of Learning: Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Physical Development as these are the foundations for other learning. There is planned daily teaching of phonics, maths and reading, as well as planned activities to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, covering the Specific Areas of Learning: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design. For disadvantaged children, vocabulary is pre-taught, alongside keep-up groups across the curriculum and targeted adult support linked to need.

Children are taught to read in a systematic way and at Heage we follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds programme with fidelity. In Reception, the children are introduced to Phase 2 and 3 where they learn grapheme phoneme correspondence (GPC) and segmenting and blending skills to decode words. During the summer term, children move on to Phase 4, which consolidates this learning and teaches skills to support the reading of longer words and more complicated sentences. Children are encouraged to read at home and are listened to regularly in school. They are given books that closely match their phonic knowledge in order for them to apply their learning with the aim of becoming successful, confident and fluent readers.

In Reception, we use the Drawing Club approach to develop a love of reading, writing and story-telling. Children are exposed to, and immersed in, a wide variety of high-quality fiction and non-fiction texts, including poetry, and visual stimuli to help develop vocabulary, fine-motor skills, phonics, and early writing alongside oracy and comprehension skills. We have a strong focus on developing children's writing skills, ensuring they develop an effective pencil grip and correct letter formation, as well as using their developing phonic knowledge to spell and write words and sentences with increasing independence across the curriculum.

In Mathematics at Heage, we follow the White Rose Maths scheme of work which breaks learning down into small sequential steps. High quality learning environments, resources

and meaningful interactions with adults, support children in developing their mathematical thinking and reasoning skills. Pupils learn through games and tasks using concrete manipulatives and pictorial structures and representations which are then rehearsed and applied within their own child-led exploration.

Our wider curriculum is taught through a combination of adult-led activities and child-initiated learning. Engaging, purposeful and contextual activities are planned to build on children's natural curiosity. We provide a broad range of meaningful experiences, guided by the three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning: Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically. The balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning allows adults to introduce key skills and concepts, whilst still providing the children with the opportunity to rehearse and master these skills and foster their own independence. Adult interactions are designed to maximise on learning opportunities and capitalise on teachable moments via sustained shared thinking throughout the inside and outside provision.

Staff understand the links between the Areas of Learning in the EYFS and the different subjects in the National Curriculum. By drawing on the wider whole school curriculum, we ensure continuity, coherence, and high expectations from the very start of a child's learning journey and secure the foundations for progress throughout their time in school.

Impact:

Prior to children starting at Heage, staff spend time gathering information from parents and carers and previous settings to gain an understanding of the whole child and where they are at. During the first few weeks in Reception, staff use ongoing assessments, observations and conversations with the child to develop a baseline assessment. This identifies each individual's starting points in all areas so that we can plan experiences to ensure progress. Children, including disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress from their individual starting points, with increasing proportions achieving the Early Learning Goals.

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA), which is a statutory requirement for schools is carried out during the first few weeks of a child starting school. This assessment is carried out one-to-one with each child, and focuses on 'Language, Communication and Literacy,' and 'Mathematics.' The purpose of this is to show the progress children make from Reception until the end of KS2.

In maths, there are 'checkpoints' at the end of each White Rose block of learning to check that children have understood the key concepts that have been taught.

Phonic assessments are carried out in Reception using the Little Wandle assessments every half term, to quickly identify pupils that are not making expected progress and enable us to support children to 'keep up' rather than 'catch up' where possible. This information is also used to ensure that children are given reading books that match their phonic knowledge.

Ongoing observations are used as 'Assessment for Learning'; information gathered is used to inform weekly planning and identify children's next steps. Staff systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly, and provide immediate

feedback with appropriate challenge or support, resulting in a strong impact on developing prior knowledge and embedding new learning.

Assessments across all EYFS Areas of Learning are completed three times per year and used to monitor the progress children have made. Judgements are made based on accumulative observations and in-depth knowledge of the children acquired through ongoing assessment by all staff. These ongoing assessments are used to inform planning and next steps in teaching and learning for all children throughout the year. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress through high-quality talk, targeted support, and consistent teaching of core skills (especially language and early reading), alongside the building of strong relationships.

In Summer Term 2, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed, where teachers judge whether every child has met each of the 17 Early Learning Goals. They are assessed as either 'Emerging' or 'Expected.' This information is shared with parents and the Year 1 teacher to support children in having a smooth transition into Key Stage 1. Children enter Year 1 ready for the next stage of their learning.

Our vision is for children to leave Reception as confident, curious and capable learners who demonstrate independence, resilience and a strong sense of belonging. They are equipped with the knowledge, skills and learning behaviours needed to successfully access the Key Stage 1 curriculum and continue to flourish throughout their school journey.