



Helmshore Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

September 2026

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

*"To go further than we thought
To run faster than we hoped
To reach higher than we dreamed
To become the best we are able to be".*

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children to the end of the Reception year. In our school, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. The Early Years Foundation Stage is important both in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Many children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in our community. The EYFS education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- it focuses on the importance of "the unique child" as a competent learner
- we fully appreciate the need for positive relationships
- it provides a rich and stimulating enabling environment
- we appreciate that children's learning and development varies according to the individual child

Aims of the EYFS

The curriculum of the EYFS underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's learning in the following areas:

Prime Areas:

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

Specific Areas:

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

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning across the primary age range. Children experience a balance of tightly focused teaching, and the continuous provision of more independent, play based activities with sensitive intervention and modelling.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the creative and carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve "Expected" in the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate, stimulating and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations and assessments which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- the clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- the regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Continuous provision in the EYFS

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world, both indoors and outdoors, on large and small scales. They practise and extend ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for boundaries. They are strongly encouraged to think creatively in collaboration with other children and independently, communicating with others as they investigate and solve problems. All play experiences are carefully structured and form an important part of the carefully planned curriculum, with children contributing their own ideas where possible.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

In our school we sincerely believe that each child is special. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. A significant number of children exceed these goals and provision is made to ensure that they reach their individual potentials.

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 to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect and promote the understanding of diversity
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- carefully monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Equal Opportunities

Children are given full access to the curriculum regardless of race, age, gender, faith, sexual orientation and disability in accordance with recent regulations.

We promote British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs set out by the government's Prevent Strategy.

The EYFS curriculum

The curriculum for the EYFS in our school is based on the seven areas of learning identified in the EYFS Framework. The indoor and outdoor experiences that our children meet enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across all areas of learning. The curriculum is creative and makes links between several areas of learning wherever possible.

We have developed the INSPIRE approach based on the widely known Curiosity Approach. Our intentions are that children are inspired in all aspects of the curriculum and enticed to pursue their interests.

Throughout the Reception year in our school, children have a short daily Mathematics-based session and a combined Communication and Language and Literacy-based session. The skills and understanding needed to progress into Year 1 are developed in a sensitive and often practical way.

Working towards the Early Learning Goals provides the basis for planning throughout the EYFS. Our medium term planning is completed half-termly and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children. This is amended and developed as children contribute their own ideas and interests.

Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS largely takes the form of observation and discussion, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

During the children's first half-term in the EYFS, teachers carry out a range of assessments including RBA baseline assessment to gain additional insight into each child's ability. We then use them to help to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort of children. We use this information to adapt learning experiences for individual children and groups of children. We share assessment information with parents at the parental consultation meeting in October.

The EYFS profiles are developed through the children's Learning Records throughout the year, and a small selection of samples of children's recorded work is kept to share with each child's next teacher. The children take home their own Learning Records at the end of the year. They share their Learning Records regularly in class as a basis for discussion.

Parents receive Summer term reports that offer comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. They highlight the child's strengths and development needs and gives details of the child's general progress.

The role of parents

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We encourage involvement through

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts at our school;
- inviting all parents to induction sessions during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception classes;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents to become secure
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents;
- offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents. There is regular communication with home through the child's "Home /School Diary".

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive and creative attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, in order to encourage independent learning.

Safeguarding

For safeguarding procedures, please refer to the school's Safeguarding Policy. EYFS supervision is carried out regularly with focused meetings half termly. Any concerns raised are recorded on CPOMS where appropriate.

The governing body will review this policy in September 2027, or earlier if deemed necessary.

Signed:

Head teacher

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Date: September 2026