

# EARLY YEARS AT HEATHFIELD

## Principles behind Early Years Education at Heathfield

- Young children have a **natural curiosity** about the world around them and **learn best through play and active experiences**.
- Learning which is **child-led** offers the most individualised approach within the Early Years and **develops children's independence, resilience and self-esteem**.
- All adults working within Early Years are committed to Planning in the Moment which involves closely observing children at play, seeking "teachable moments" within children's play and interacting with them to develop their learning.
- **The outdoor environment is valued as highly as the classroom** and offers children a different, valuable experience of learning and play.
- Short, adult-led inputs support the children's early learning in phonics, reading and maths.



Teaching and learning within Nursery and Reception follows the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and is informed by Development Matters, the government guidance on effective Early Years education. Within Early Years, we promote the children's development through recognising the characteristics of effective teaching and learning within each day.



These are:

- **playing and exploring** - children experience new things and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children are challenged and supported as they encounter difficulties and learn new skills
- **creating and thinking critically** - children develop and refine their own ideas, making links and developing strategies.

Within EY, we focus on the seven areas of learning and development, which include:

### Three prime areas:

**Communication and language:** children develop their confidence in expressing themselves and listening to others

**Physical development:** children develop their co-ordination, control, and movement making extensive use of our outdoor areas

**Personal, social and emotional development:** children learn to form positive relationships and develop respect for themselves and others

### Four specific areas:

**Literacy:** children start to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write through accessing a wide range of reading materials

**Mathematics:** children develop their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, and describing shapes

**Understanding the world:** children start to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

**Expressive arts and design:** children explore a wide range of art materials, as well as developing their ideas through music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

