

Intent

Reception is the start of a child's academic career and thus, a vital year in their lives. During this year, the foundations of learning are set and the behaviours for learning are created. Therefore, at Heathfield Academy we ensure that we have extremely high expectations of our children and no learning time is lost. The curriculum is thoroughly planned out to incorporate teacher led focus sessions, exploration with independent application time and an opportunity to work meaningfully outside. Our aim is to develop individuals who are creative, independent and who have a love of learning.

Implementation

Our planning starts before the children even step foot into Heathfield Academy with home visits, nursery visits and parent meetings. This ensures that we have a good understanding of the needs that our children will have. We can then pre plan and prepare our provision to support these needs. We continue to assess our children throughout the year half termly by using 2Simple observations of independent play and focused work. These assessments are moderated between teachers in Reception at Heathfield, teachers within STEP and teachers in the wider community as we feel communication is vital and sharing good practise is imperative.

Our curriculum is carefully balanced between 'free flow' and focus teacher led learning. It is vital to ensure that our children develop the prime areas of learning and in particular for our children, managing their feelings and behaviour and developing their speaking, listening and understanding skills. Thus, 'free flow' and exploration is very important and a large part of our EYFS curriculum. In addition, to ensure the children have the chance to meet our high expectations, our daily timetable is varied and tight. It consists of 30 minute phonics each day, 15-30 minute literacy input, which is focused around a high quality text each half term, a 15-30 minute maths session which is supported by Mathematics Mastery and a 15-30 minute topic session. In-between these focused learning sessions are chances for the children to explore the learning environment at their leisure. The environment will be meaningfully set up to ensure that all 17 areas of learning are covered both inside and outside.

Many of our children have English as an additional home language (EAL) and come into Reception with little to no language. Language development is a big priority for us at Heathfield Academy and our curriculum is tailored to support these needs. As a result at Heathfield Academy we have chosen a high quality phonics scheme 'Read. Write. Inc' to start every child's journey into reading and writing. We believe it is important for children to learn letter-sound relationships because English uses letters in the alphabet to represent sounds. The scheme we have picked does this in a fun and engaging way by encouraging rote memorisation based on a child's visual and physical (actions) memory of sounds.

Mathematics Mastery is very language rich and uses star words which we add to other areas of learning and our literacy sessions use Talk for Writing techniques where the children learn the story with actions. By the end of Reception the children will have a bank of at least 6 high quality stories they can recite and begin to write about. EAL interventions take place when needed for short, sharp bursts which focus on modelling language and retelling stories.

Impact

Our children in Reception are exposed to a rich, broad and balanced curriculum where high expectations are set and urgency is a core value. This means, that our children leave reception confident, articulate and excited about their learning. When looking at the work they produce in their writing books, the progress they make is exceptional and when talking to the children their confidence and excitement is evident. Our children therefore leave EYFS and enter Year 1 and the National Curriculum with an outstanding knowledge base.