

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

## What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

It is for children from birth to five years, and covers the time they spend in Nursery to the end of Reception Class in Primary School. It was introduced in September 2008, incorporating 'Birth to Three Matters' and 'The Foundation Stage', making one document, which grows with the child as they develop. This was updated in 2012 and changes were made in the way information is relayed between parent and carer.

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support, which enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the Early Years and children's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow.

Children at HeadStart will be offered a wide variety of experiences and will be given the opportunity to enjoy their learning.



Your child will be assigned a Key-Person in each of the rooms they are in. The Key-Person must help ensure children's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The Key-Person must seek to engage and support parents in guiding their child's development at home; they can also aid families to engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

At HeadStart our staff team are qualified professionals, working within the age range in which they specialise. The Nursery has an Early Years Professional working alongside the team offering support and guidance to staff and families, 2 staff qualified to graduate level, 11 staff qualified to NVQ Level 3 and 1 member of staff qualified at NVQ Level 2. There are also several volunteer staff who have childcare experience or are on placement from College/University, whilst training for a childcare qualification.

I hope this information pack helps to explain the Foundation Stage and Learning Journals, but if you would like any further information then please ask a member of Staff who will be happy to explain.

## There are 3 Prime Areas and 4 Specific Areas of Development within the EYFS

### Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

### Specific Areas

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Practitioners working with the youngest children (under 3's) will focus strongly on the 3 Prime Areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other 4 Specific Areas.

Below is a break down of all seven of these areas to give you an understanding of what the EYFS curriculum covers.

### What Personal, Social and Emotional Development means for Children

It involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their

feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

### **What Communication and Language Development means for Children**

It involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

### **What Physical Development means for Children**

It involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.



### **What Literacy Development means for Children**

It involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

### **What Mathematics means for children**

It involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.

### **What Understanding the World means for Children**

It involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.



### **What Expressive Arts and Design means for Children**

It involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

## Learning Journals

Whilst your child is at HeadStart they will have a Learning Journal Record Book, this will contain important information about your child, as well as clear evidence of progress towards the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Through research, it has been proven children learn best through play. Nursery Staff will observe your child as they play and the observations, which Staff make on your child will help them to plan new and exciting experiences to encourage further learning. This information will be shared with you during informal meetings with your child's Key Person.

Nursery Staff will be observing your child in the day-to-day activities and will record their progress. All information regarding your child will be shared with you through regular progress reports, which are completed by your child's key person. This progress check will identify your child's strengths and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. With input from parents these reports will form part of your child's developmental progress and can be shared with other Professionals should this be helpful.

Observations will usually be short notes with photographic evidence. There may be some more general observations in the Learning Journal, which show how your child is responding to situations around them and something of the way in which they learn.

Prime and Specific Areas of Learning taken from  
EYFS Curriculum (2012)

# HeadStart Day Nursery

and

## The Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents guide to

The areas of learning and development, which must shape activities and experiences for children in all early years settings.