

Quality of Education Policy

(including curriculum, teaching, learning and
assessment)

The policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher and
Governors.

Policy reviewed	August 2026
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Approved by governors:	November 2024 January 2025 August 2025 September 2026

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Our Curriculum Vision

At Heron, we aim to deliver an enriching, challenging, and highly personalised curriculum that encourages learners to achieve the best possible outcomes and reflects the world they live in today.

Through inclusive cross-curricular and engaging experiences, pupils will foster a passion for learning, developing them academically, socially, emotionally, and physically so that they can fulfil their true potential and fully participate in society.

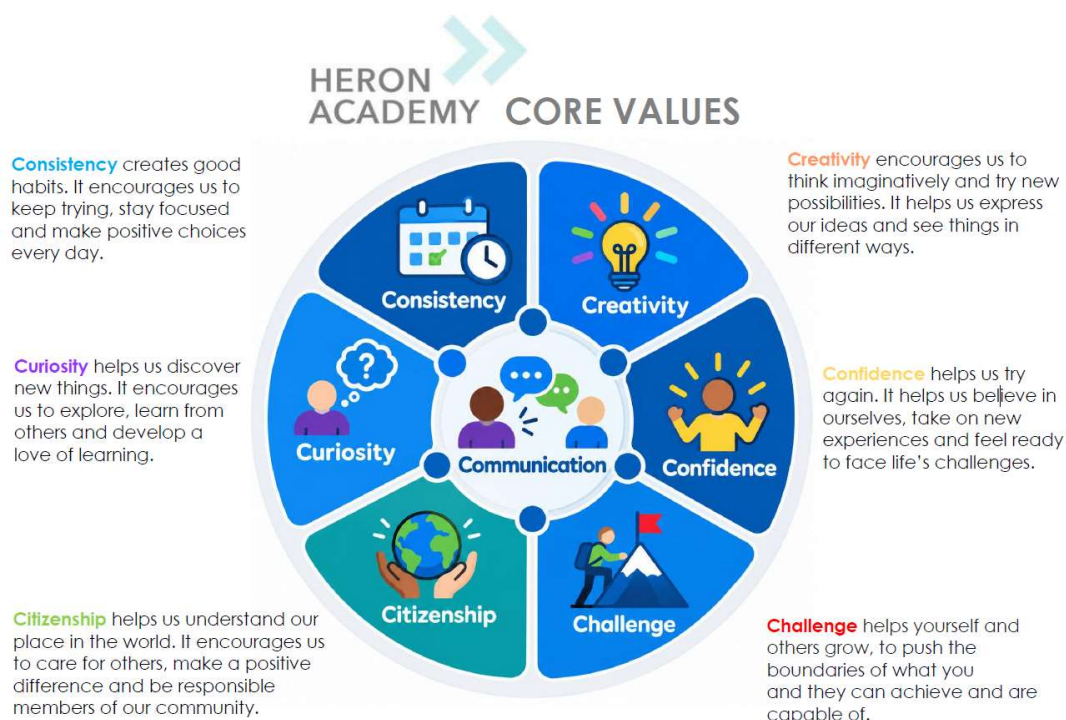
What does 'Learning' look like?

Our curriculum aims to make learning visible in various ways at Heron. We expect pupils to be actively involved in all lessons and make progress. We value every effort our pupils make and make sure we aim to enable pupils to:

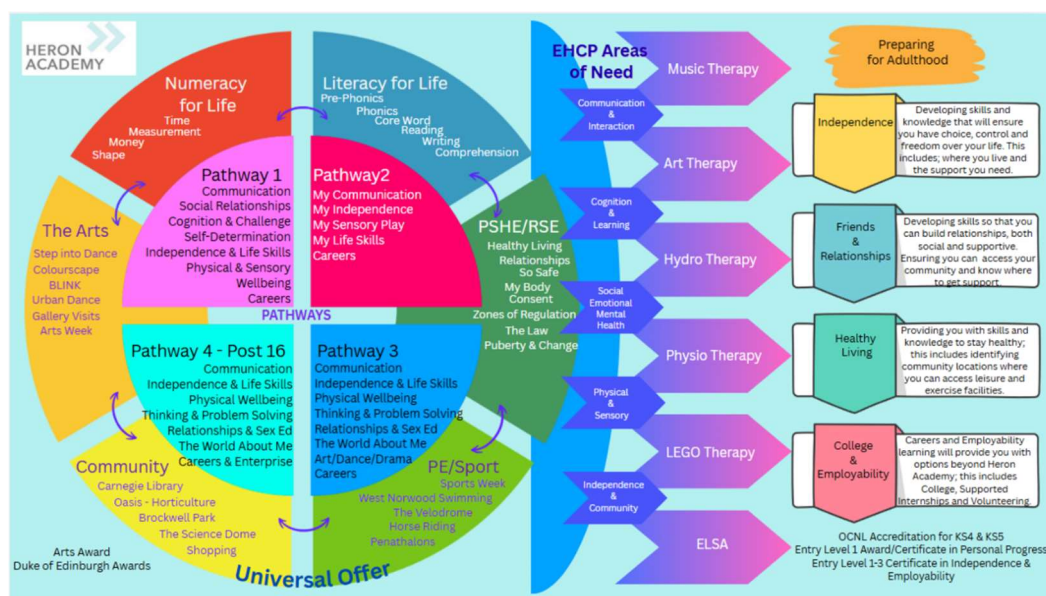
- Be engaged – explore, realise, predict, persist, initiate
- Be interested and motivated to learn
- Be actively involved in lessons in the classroom around school
- Be happy and stimulated
- Be supported and nurtured to make progress
- Try their best
- Ask for help if needed
- Look and listen to staff and peers
- Communicate in lessons – using symbols, switches, pointing, speaking, and listening etc
- Make choices and follow instructions
- Work in a variety of contexts – groups, pairs, individually
- Demonstrate thinking and problem-solving
- Work functionally where appropriate
- Work in diverse ways and use the senses to understand the world
- Be safe and well-behaved

For more on pathways (see Curriculum Pathway overview on the school website)

Our school values, underpin these curriculum aims:



Wider Curriculum



The Six Principles of Nurture

Alongside teaching the curriculum, we embed nurture into daily practices as we recognise its importance in supporting intellectual and social growth. We consider 'The Six Principles of Nurture' in all that we do to provide a warm and safe school environment.

- Learning is understood developmentally.
- The classroom offers a safe base.
- The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing.
- Language is a vital means of communication.
- All behaviour is communication.
- The importance of transition in pupils' lives.

British Values

Our broader school curriculum recognises the importance of teaching British Values. The values are embedded into lessons, daily activities, and topics throughout the school to promote spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development.

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith

Our school values diversity and respect, so our curriculum promotes cooperation and represents diverse voices.

Multi-Agency Approach

We work closely with a multi-agency support team to ensure pupils progress in all areas. This team consists of staff who support communication, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, medical, behaviour, sensory processing, and added therapy services. Targets from these areas are added to individual learning programs and embedded into the daily practices within the classroom.

Assessment for Learning

All planning is based on thoroughly assessing individual pupils and knowing our pupils well. All pupils have individual personal learning intention maps (PLIMs) based on their long-term EHCP targets: -

- Baseline assessments are undertaken on entry to school to enable teachers to plan for progression.
- Targets from Educational Health and Care plan outcomes feature in all PLIMs throughout the school.

PLIMs are changed termly to ensure targets are mastered in different contexts. Termly PLIM reports are shared with pupils and parents/carers. These also feed into the pupil's annual review.

PLIMs are assessed using the Evidence for Learning (EFL) assessment platform. The PLIMs are known as PLGs, (Personalised Learning Goals) and form the main body of our termly reports to parents. In addition to PLGs we track progress in Phonics, Numeracy for Life, Literacy for Life, Physical Development, Horticulture, Rebound Therapy and Swimming.

Annual Reviews report to parents and carers on pupil progression and next steps.

- Within school PLIMs, data is tracked and monitored half-termly (to review whether pupils are on track to achieve) and termly.
- We use a variety of assessment packages throughout the school, including Evidence for Learning (EFL), engagement model, Pre-key stage standards, and National Curriculum standards. We also use OCNL, Arts Mark, and the Duke of Edinburgh awards in Key Stages 4 and 5.
- Classwork/evidence is marked, or observations are made, and pupils are given effective feedback within lessons (see attached marking policy)
- We encourage pupils to contribute to and evaluate their learning where appropriate using different strategies throughout school.
- Accreditation moderation takes place termly.

Curriculum Planning Documents

Throughout school, we use a range of resources to plan learning which is appropriate to pupils' starting points, their age, their ability and in preparation for Adulthood. We use the 'Equals' Schemes of Work, Oak National Academy Frameworks and a range of Pre-National Curriculum Frameworks to ensure that we have a balanced and engaging curriculum to meet needs at all ages. We aim to use the curriculum as a guide to design exciting themes, topics, lessons, and learning opportunities through which pupils will grow and learn. Planning is reviewed regularly and adapted where needed to keep content up-to-date and appropriate for different classes and pupils. All planning is saved in the school system for the term

and year. Senior Leaders have access to the shared planning area for evaluation and monitoring.

Long Term Plans

Long-term planning ensures the curriculum is broad and balanced and builds on previous learning. Long-term planning identifies topics or theme headings to ensure pupils encounter various topics throughout their education here at Heron. The flexible curriculum can be adapted and amended to suit cohorts appropriately.

Medium Term Plans

Medium-term Plans are written for half term or a full term depending on the content and requirements of the curriculum. Medium-term planning addresses the termly overview of the strands within each pathway and how this links to pupils' individual PLIMs. These plans will identify the class, the teacher, the topic, the date, the learning objectives, the learning experiences and resources needed. Each class teacher creates a plan for literacy, including reading, numeracy and communication and language. The communication and language targets are co-constructed in consultation with the SaLT team. Cross-curricular planning includes physical development, personal, social & emotional development, careers, understanding of the world and expressive arts and design in KS3 and KS4.

In KS4 and KS5, teachers plan the delivery of external accreditation (See Curriculum and Assessment Map).

Medium-term plans in KS5 also include preparation for adulthood, life skills and transition.

Termly planning takes place and is co-constructed in consultation with OT and physiotherapists.

Short Term Plans

We also use additional weekly planning, which enables teachers to react to learning and build into the curriculum enhancements such as continuous provision, enrichment days, individualised timetables, and pathway-specific learning. This planning indicates lesson content and daily routines where learning takes place, such as registration, postural management, continuous provision, lessons, and transitions.

All classes follow a sensory timetable approach that uses the senses as visual, auditory, and olfactory cues to identify the days of the week.

Timetabling

Classes have timetables that meet the curriculum's requirements. These are stored centrally, and the Senior Leaders have access to them. Timetables specify class, teacher, staff, subjects, locations, lesson start times, lunchtimes/ breaks, etc.

Enrichment Days and Special Events

Throughout the year, teachers and school staff plan enrichment activities to fulfil the wider world curriculum—we have Sports Week, Safer Internet Day, World Book Day, Arts Week, Comic Relief, Children in Need, Red Nose Day, and Black History Month. Year after year, we try new special days and celebrations to enrich the education of pupils here at Heron.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of planning, teaching and learning, and assessment are built into the school calendar and form part of the School Development Plan. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) decide on weekly themes for Learning Walks which are shared with all staff and noted on our centrally monitored Learning Walks Tracker. When monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning, and progression, we also consider staff appraisal targets and curriculum action targets.

The Deputy Headteacher has strong oversight of the whole school curriculum and can, therefore, monitor planning and pupil progress across the school.

Data throughout the school is used formally to measure pupil and pathway progress. This information is shared with staff to plan in response to, e.g., any areas for intervention or actions.

Formal lesson observations evaluate and monitor individual teachers' delivery of the school curriculum. Feedback is given to teachers in detail; highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

Throughout the term, learning walks take place weekly. The whole class team receives feedback on strengths and areas for development. This encourages teachers and class staff to be on timetable, be facilitating engaging and inclusive lessons and ensuring that pupils emerging needs are catered for appropriately.

Middle Leadership

Our middle leaders oversee whole school priority areas; The Arts, PSHE/RSE, Careers, Phonics, Communication and Behaviour across all Key Stages.

Learning at Heron

Learning is part of everything we do at Heron. We have high expectations of each pupil. We plan to learn formally in lessons and informally through our school experiences.

We are developing skilled practitioners who understand pupils learn in different ways: visually, auditory, verbally, physically, logically, socially, and solitarily. We recognise the individual needs of our pupils and that they learn best with our support, nurture and guidance. We also understand that pupils with specific conditions, such as ASC, learn with carefully planned communication, environments

and approaches. In everything that we do in school, the learning style of our pupils is focused on encouraging interest, engagement, and progress.

Lesson 'Non-negotiables'

At Heron,

- Staff interact with pupils to support engagement.
- Lessons are designed to support pupils' readiness for learning.
- Learning objectives are present in every lesson.
- Lessons are well-prepared and structured.
- Formative assessment informs pupils of the next steps.
- Individual needs are catered for.
- Appropriate AAC is used and tailored to pupil communication needs.

Further Opportunities for Learning

All staff are responsible for consistently promoting the school's core values. Assemblies and collective worship will be well-planned and involve opportunities for pupil participation wherever possible.

Enrichment activities should be open to all and encouraged for all pupils who wish to attend. They should provide opportunities for extending learning beyond the classroom. This includes short trips, clubs, day trips, and residential trips.

Leisure and break times should be adult-led and support the pupils' social communication.

Therapists will support further opportunities for learning in and outside of the classroom. Pupils can contribute to school development through the pupil voice and other advocacy forums.

Continued Professional Development

All school staff have access to a wider range of internal and external CPD opportunities. Statutory training is embedded into the practices and curriculum. We have set INSET days and planned staff meeting times designated to curriculum initiatives, changes, and developments. Any information is cascaded to all staff in departmental meetings, emails, etc.

The Role of Governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on Teaching and Learning. In particular, they:

- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes.
- These include reports from the Head Teachers, external reviews, and visits from the governors.

The Role of Parents and Carers

We believe parents and carers have a fundamental role in helping young people learn. We do all we can to inform parents and carers about what and how pupils are learning by:

- holding parents' evenings
- coffee mornings
- annual review meetings
- sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the topics
- sharing PLIMs with parents and carers
- offering learning at home opportunities where appropriate
- sending home reading books and schoolwork where appropriate
- regular reporting using Arbor.
- completing parent view questionnaires as a form of evaluation twice a year in school

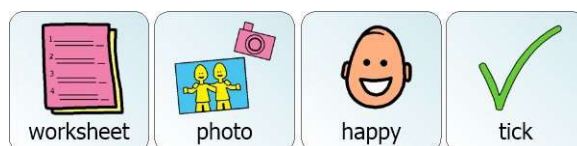
For more information about the curriculum, see the website, which has an overview and newsletters demonstrating it in action. You can also contact the school office, which will assign you a contact.

Heron Curriculum & Assessment Map

	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Key stage 5	PMLD
Curriculum	EQUALS Oak National Academy			EQUALS Sensory Curriculum Routes for Learning
Assessment	EFL	EFL OCNL	OCNL Arts Mark Duke of Edinburgh EFL Mars Maths	Engagement Steps OCNL Duke of Edinburgh EFL
Core	Communication SOW from Equals Soundabout – Pre-Phonics Little Wandle Phonics			Communication & Interaction Expressive Communication Receptive Communication
Core	Personal, Social and Emotional Development SOW from Equals Citizenship Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing Relationships and Sex Education		Personal, Social and Emotional Development SOW from Equals Citizenship Values for Living Preparation for adult life	Personal, Social and Emotional Development SOW from Equals Citizenship Physical health All About Me
Core	Physical Development & Physical Education SOW from Equals		Physical Development Health & Recreation in the Community	Physical Development Therapy Input Postural Management
Specific	Literacy SOW from Equals Reading, Spelling, Comprehension, Grammar Writing		Functional English Functional Reading Functional Writing	Literacy Sensory Stories
	Little Wandle and Pre-Phonics			Pre-phonics
Specific	Maths & Problem Solving SOW from Equals	Functional Maths	Functional Maths	Maths Sensory Stories Rhymes
Specific	Understanding of the world Computing Cooking & Nutrition Careers		Employability & Careers Community Links Enrichment Days Duke of Edinburgh Independent Living Skills	Thematic approach / cross- curricular coverage
Specific	Expressive Arts EQUALS (which include) Art Music Dance Drama Enterprise activities			Art & Design Thematic approach / cross- curricular coverage

NB—Within key stages, there is flexibility; teachers can use other curricula to support pupils in class where appropriate.

Heron Marking Policy



At Heron, we value all the different work pupils undertake. We demonstrate this by ensuring work is celebrated, acknowledged and assessed.

The aim of our marking and feedback is that the pupils feel their work is valued so staff can assess learning for the next steps in learning.

We do this in a variety of ways: -

Feedback

- Ensuring verbal praise is given during lessons
- Stickers, stamps and written comments are to be added to appropriate pieces of work
- Pupils to self-assess within lessons where appropriate at their levels
- Special achievements taken to the headteacher
- Pupils who show a positive attitude towards schoolwork or achieve milestones may also get star of the week in a designated assembly
- Work or images of pupils completing work may also be displayed on the wall in class where appropriate
- Some classes have reward charts where appropriate

Marking

- Staff can use any colour of pen to mark work – we like lots of colours (i.e. Pinks and Greens)
- Staff can make positive comments on work where appropriate (Using a WWW and EBI approach)
- Staff to sign and date work
- Staff to encourage pupils to self-correct where appropriate
- Pupils can mark their work where appropriate

Evidence

At Heron, we are using the Evidence for Learning platform to record achievements. The system has the engagement model and pre-key stage standards, as well as Little Wandle and Pre-Phonics assessments.

Evidence for learning will include photographs, observation statements, assessment tracking sheets, and PLIMs.

Pupils in KS4 and post-16 will have accreditation files with evidence and photos linking directly to the framework in which the pupil works. (see separate curriculum pathways information for more clarification)

Communicating with Parents

- We celebrate learning with parents – formally and informally
- We share work at parents' evenings, annual reviews and through email comments on Arbor.