

HEMDEAN HOUSE SCHOOL  

---

CAVERSHAM

## **EARLY YEARS**

### **Head of Early Years: Mrs M Dickason**

Early Years Education at Hemdean House School is delivered by our dedicated Nursery School and our Reception Class.

### **Nursery School (Ages 3 – 4)**

#### **Teacher: Mrs S Hardie**

Our Nursery class is very much part of the School, offering a caring, purposeful and stimulating environment for children between the age of three years to starting Reception. We can offer flexible part-time or full-time sessions, as well as Before School Care, After School Care and Holiday Club.

The Nursery is staffed by a qualified teacher and qualified Early Years Practitioners and, as such, draws from a range of best practice from a variety of models of Early Years education.

*“I like playing with the water table and in the garden. I can now pedal on the big trikes and I like making gingerbread.”*

- Nursery child

During a Nursery session, children have the opportunity for a broad range of learning experiences, both adult-directed and child-initiated (self-selected learning through play). We use topic-based learning as well as following the children’s individual interests. Small-group time allows children to play early phonic games, working towards a more structured individual acquisition of early literacy and numeracy skills. We find this approach ensures the children grow to be self-motivated, confident and well equipped to flourish when they move into Reception and beyond.

*“When my son started Hemdean Nursery School, he went from being a shy boy who was wary of new situations, to being really self-assured and happy. I went from being an anxious parent wanting the best for him, to being completely happy that I knew he was in a kind, caring environment.”*

- Parent

Full day sessions are 8.30 am to 3.30 pm

Part-time sessions are 8.30 am to 12 pm, or 12.30 pm to 3.30 pm

**Reception (Ages 4 – 5)**  
**Teacher: Mrs M Dickason**

Starting Reception is a big step for little people, which is why we help make the transition to “big school” as easy as possible. Children work towards the Early Years Foundation Stage through a combination of carefully planned adult-led and child-initiated activities. Each child is valued as an individual and their interests and needs are fully catered for.

*“Children in Reception at Hemdean House feel really nurtured, which helps them grow in confidence and enjoy their start to school life.”*

- Parent

Children participate in the wider activities of the whole school community, including attending assemblies weekly, where they are awarded with the Head Teacher’s Prize and have the opportunity to show their work and creations. They also take part in plays and perform in the church at Christmas time.

Our Reception children benefit from specialist teaching in Computing, Outdoor Learning, French, Games, Music and Drama. Cricket, Ballet and Street Dance are also offered as optional extras.

Each child has one-to-one time with Mrs Dickason for literacy and numeracy activities every day. This enables the children to work at their own speed, re-visiting concepts or advancing further depending on their personal needs. They also have daily phonic input, followed by a short handwriting session. The children read or take part in pre-reading activities every day.

*Quotes from Reception children:*

*“I like playing with the slime, reading, playing cricket and playing with my friends.”*

*“I love playing in the role play area. I’m always the mum.”*

*“We go and play on the field. I like to go down the slide and the pole.”*

## **INFANTS (Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2)**

**Year 1 teacher: Mrs E Hattrick**

**Year 2 teacher: Mrs H Illingworth**

In Year 1 each child's needs are continued to be catered for to inspire a passion for learning and to harness their enthusiasm. They have a rich and exciting curriculum in which they are encouraged to reach their individual potential.

*"We like that the school not only honours academic achievement but rewards courtesy and kindness. It is definitely the start at school we wished for our children."*

- Parent

There are daily phonics activities and the children read to the teacher every day. Spellings are sent home to learn once a week as well as a continuation of their maths work they have learned in their lessons. They are taught by specialist teachers in Computing, Outdoor Learning, PE, French, Music and Drama and they are involved in termly productions and inter-house sports competitions in PE lessons.

Street Dance, Cricket and Ballet are offered as optional extras, which prove very popular amongst the children.

*"I love that we learn even more exciting things in Year 1. I really look forward to school as I have lots of friends, the teachers are really nice and the lessons are fun!"*

- Year 1 child

In Year 2 we continue to build on the foundations laid in Year 1. This is also a time to broaden the children's skills and learning in preparation for Year 3.

The children still have lessons taught by specialist teachers. They are encouraged to use the skills learnt in the classroom through investigation and problem solving. Spellings and times tables continue to be sent home on a weekly basis and, in addition, numeracy and literacy homework is given to extend and consolidate the weekly curriculum work. The children learn about authors old and new through stories and an author of the week.

*"Hemdean House ensures the children have personal attention and that the children's individual needs are met. It's a wonderful environment and our children always enjoy school and are challenged within their capabilities."*

- Parent

They enjoy their sharing time when they can show or talk about special events or experiences in their lives. The children particularly enjoy sharing their work with Year 6, both listening to stories written by Year 6 and reading their own creations to the older children.

The children are encouraged to become more independent, for example, changing in and out of PE kit regularly and when moving around the school, as well as personal input into assembly presentations.

There are half termly trips out of school such as to Rushall Farm, The River and Rowing Museum and Greys Court and seasonal walks to discover changes in the local environment.

## **JUNIORS (Key Stage 2: Years 3 – 6)**

**Head of Juniors: Miss A Hicks**

**Year 3 teacher: Miss T Ta**

**Year 4 teacher: Miss A Hicks**

**Year 5 Teacher: Mrs G McMillan**

**Year 6 teacher: Mrs M Langridge**

The Junior years at our school are ones where passions sparked in Infants are inspired and embellished. We aim to guide their growing inquisitiveness and enthusiasm for learning by providing an engaging enhanced core curriculum. This is supplemented by a diverse programme of non-core subjects, with specialist teachers delivering lessons in Drama, Music, French, Computing, Outdoor Learning and PE.

Our highly qualified and experienced teaching staff ensure that every child is guided carefully to make the most of their strengths and improve on their weaknesses, allowing them to flourish and grow in confidence. We ensure their needs are met individually, whether they require extra support, or to be challenged with harder tasks.

*“Hemdean House School is a delightful primary school. It has a family feel and the teaching staff are fantastic and always go the extra mile.”*

*- Parent*

We are very proud that our Key Stage 2 results year on year were exceptional and well above the national average. But we don't just focus on academic results; we aim to develop well-rounded children through delivering curriculum, experiential trips, pastoral care and clubs and activities. In Years 5 and 6 off-site trips to outdoor activity venues are also offered to further the children's learning experience.

## **FOREST SCHOOL**

**Teacher: Mrs H Illingworth**

Hemdean House is developing an exciting and imaginative range of Forest School outdoor learning opportunities with strong links to conservation groups including Caversham Globe, the local Wildlife Trust, RSPB, RHS and Woodland Trust. We have received environmental awards from the RSPB, RHS and Woodland Trust.

Our beautiful grounds house our own outdoor classroom, woodland, gardens, pond and wild habitats. We also go exploring further afield, with regular outings to local farms and inspiring landscapes.

Children enjoy activities such as making homes for wildlife, creating natural artwork, growing vegetables and looking for seasonal changes, all under the guidance of a qualified Forest School teacher.

We are passionate about opening the curriculum to children who struggle with classroom based learning. We want to promote a love of the natural environment and getting muddy!

Outdoor learning supports many areas of the curriculum including Science, Maths and English. Recent projects include Rocket Seeds and the RHS Campaign for School Gardening; ideas for the future include developing a weather station and workshops for parents.

## **SPORTS**

**Teacher: Miss S Green**

We believe in empowering children with the knowledge they need to lead healthy, active lifestyles, which is why sport is a big part of life at Hemdean. By keeping active and participating in a range of sports, children are motivated to improve their fitness and develop their hand-eye co-ordination. They are also encouraged to work on their decision-making, team building and leadership skills.

We make full use of our fantastic grounds, where we have a netball/tennis court and a large playing field. Each week children take part in PE lessons and the sports vary each term. The range of sports includes, Football, Tag Rugby, Netball, Swimming, Uni Hoc, Gymnastics, Dance, Badminton, Rounders, Cricket and Tennis. There are inter-house competitions throughout the year and inter school sports fixtures each term. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also participate in the Bikeability scheme.

## **MUSIC AND DRAMA**

**Teacher: Mrs R Parker**

All children from Nursery to Year 6 receive class Music and Drama lessons. Through these they build up integral listening, creative and team work skills which are useful in everyday life; as well as learning skills such as playing an instrument and performing to an audience.

In Infants, children learn the glockenspiel and in Year 3 each child starts learning the recorder. We put on regular concerts throughout the year to showcase the children's achievements. We produce plays for each year group, including an Infant nativity at Christmas. We have very successful Orchestra and Recorder clubs and a thriving Junior Choir who perform yearly at the Hexagon as part of the Junior Music Festival.

Individual instrumental lessons are offered in violin, cello, guitar, piano, woodwind, drum and brass instruments to those who wish to take them.

Continually developing the music awareness of the children is very important to us and we weave this into the normal school routine, for instance, by choosing a composer and an example of their music to welcome children into our morning assembly.

## **Computing**

**Teacher: Mrs G. Reilly**

At Hemdean House School all children from Reception to Year 6 have a specialist lesson each week in Computing. During these lessons the Infant children develop their coding skills using Beebot, 2Go and 2Code. In doing so, they learn how to use logical thinking when solving problems. They also use a variety of creative tools in Purple Mash to create artwork, stories, poems, leaflets and posters. The Junior children build on their coding skills and computational thinking using 2Code and Scratch. They also carry out research on the Internet on a variety of topics and use their findings to produce presentations to share with their class. The children also learn how to manipulate images and enhance the presentation of text. In addition they develop data handling skills using a variety of databases and spreadsheets to produce tables and charts. Throughout their time at the school all the children learn how to use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly and learn what to do if concerns arise.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)**

At Hemdean House, we value the differences in each individual pupil and believe that each child is entitled to receive a full and varied curriculum despite challenges they may face. We are committed to inclusive education that will develop our pupils intellectually, socially, morally, creatively, physically and spiritually. We encourage and inspire our pupils to achieve to the best of their potential.

Our teachers know the pupils very well and apply Quality First Teaching in the classroom. This means that the teaching, learning and activities provide a tailored curriculum for each child.

If you or the teachers have a concern about your child, then contact will be made to discuss concerns. We have a learning support department which identifies needs, makes provision and monitors progress.

The new SEN Code of Practice recognises 4 main areas of need:

- Cognition and Learning Needs
- Behaviour, Emotional, Social Development Needs
- Communication and Interaction Needs
- Sensory and/or Physical needs

Interventions aim to enhance learning in these areas.

If necessary, further support will be developed through Personal Educational Plans (PEPs); and sought through referrals. In the most complex cases, application for an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) can be made.

### **EARLY BIRDS CLUB and AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

Children may be left at the Early Birds Club at 8.00 am in the school hall. After School Care takes place until 6.00 pm, where the children will be given a drink and snack.

### **HOLIDAY CARE**

Holiday Care is offered throughout all holidays, apart from Bank Holidays and the period between Christmas and New Year; the hours are from 8.30 am until 6.00 pm.

We are well aware that this is a *holiday* club, not a *school* club, so the emphasis is on the children playing and having fun together.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

We offer a variety of extra-curricular activities that tap into each child's unique potential. We can discover and nurture the talents of each child with our range of clubs. We want to encourage learning that extends beyond the classroom to inspire curious minds!

*Mindfulness* (during the day)

Stilling the children's inquisitive, curious minds enabling them re-focus on the exciting school tasks ahead!

### **Lunchtime clubs**

Sewing club - for the next budding fashion designers!

Recorder club - a good introduction to the wind instrument family

Choir (Years 3 to 6) - blending the voices of different year groups to encourage harmony

Chess and board games - building future strategists!

### **After-school clubs**

Orchestra - discovering team building and co-operation within a musical setting

### **Clubs provided by professional, external organisations**

Children are offered the opportunity to participate in the following clubs, at an extra cost:

*Street dance*

The children participate in dance performances to showcase their skills!

*Glee club*

The children form a musical group that inspires happiness and future stars!

*Gymnastics*

These safe and fun gymnastic lessons are taught by highly qualified and experienced professional gymnastics coaches. Classes aim to improve gymnastics technique and acquire fundamental gymnastics skills using a variety of apparatus including boxes, benches, bar and floor work.

*Cricket*

The children work on their team building skills in a fun and innovative way. Performance Cricket is headed up by Berkshire's only ECB Level 4 cricket coach, Chris Ellison. Chris was a professional cricketer and more recently Head Coach of an England National Squad.

*Ballet*

Budding ballet dancers leaping into a class that focuses on fun, whilst learning the core disciplined principles of the dance form.