

Our approach to teaching and learning in EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage)

We are keen to ensure that EYFS outcomes are useful to pupils in terms of basic skills development, particularly in the areas of behaviour, reading, writing and maths. On leaving Reception class it is important that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education in Year 1.

The whole of the EYFS curriculum is in place throughout Reception and full use is made of national EYFS guidance.

We take as our starting point the following statement from the statutory framework for EYFS

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children's interests, responding to each child's emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for year 1.'

Teachers regularly deploy three different styles of teaching in order to give pupils a varied menu of learning experiences, both teacher initiated and pupil initiated over the course of a week.

Teacher initiated learning

Small group phonics, writing and maths- Pupils work in small groups to learn new skills in phonics, writing and maths under the direct instruction of an adult.

The whole class also works together to learn new skills in PSED, Understanding the World, Physical Development, Expressive Arts and Design and Religious Education. Children then work in small groups to practise these skills under the direct instruction of an adult.

Mixture of teacher initiated and pupil initiated learning

Choosing activities- These are activities initiated by teachers but chosen and extended by pupils. Pupils can select from a variety of activities covering the majority of the curriculum. They select the activities they wish to take part in and the order in which they wish to complete them. There is often the opportunity to adjust the activity to follow pupils' curiosity and imagination. Adults facilitate pupil learning in order to maximise on outcomes.

Pupil initiated learning

These activities start with a stimulus, often provided by the pupils themselves. Through discussion with a small group of pupils, an adult will help pupils to explore an area of

interest to them and create an outcome of value, practicing many useful skills along the way.

What does Ofsted say? (Taken from 'Early years inspection handbook for Ofsted registered provision 2021')

When observing interactions between staff and children, inspectors should consider how well staff:

- engage in dialogue with children
- watch, listen and respond to children
- model language well
- read aloud and tell stories to children
- encourage children to sing songs, nursery rhymes and musical games
- encourage children to express their thoughts and use new words
- support independence and confidence
- encourage children to speculate and test ideas through trial and error
- enable children to explore and solve problems
- behave as an excellent role model for children
- support children to recognise and respond to their own physical needs
- attend to children's personal needs
- deal with children's care arrangements, including intimate care, the levels of privacy afforded to children and the supervision arrangements when undertaking personal hygiene tasks

Characteristics of effective learning and teaching

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways children learn. These should be reflected in their practice. The Characteristics of Effective learning are...

- Active learning- Not to be confused with being physically active. In effective active learning, children maintain their attention for a period of time and are not easily distracted because they are interested and fascinated by the activity.

Practitioners help children to enjoy their achievements, be satisfied when they meet their own goals, and do what they set out to do so they are content with their own success and not dependent on the success of others.

- Playing and exploring- Practitioners

-encourage curiosity and independent exploration

-extend children's learning

-develop children's language

-feed in new vocabulary and challenge children's thinking

Children are confident to try out new ideas and are not afraid to 'have a go'

Practitioners should encourage a 'can do' attitude so children are willing to take a risk in new experiences.

- Creating and thinking critically- Practitioners help children to develop so that they make connections in their learning, make predictions and are able to think things through.

Children learn to apply skills in different context and consider the best way of completing a task without waiting to be directed. Children are thinkers who make sense of their experiences. Using what they already know to learn new things, linking information as concepts are developed and linked together, finding meaning in sequence and cause and effect.

Children giving their own explanations about how they solve a problem learn more than when they receive positive feedback and/or explanation of their errors-this is why young children watching and learning from older children benefits both.

The EYFS curriculum

The EYFS curriculum is based on the national Statutory Framework for EYFS.

The curriculum is structured around...

Three prime areas of learning

- Communication and language-Listening, attention and understanding, Speaking
- Physical development- Gross motor skills and Fine motor skills
- Personal, social and emotional development-Self regulation, Managing self and Building relationships

Four specific areas of learning

- Literacy- Comprehension, Word reading and Writing
- Mathematics-Number and Numerical Patterns
- Understanding the world- Past and Present, People, cultures and communities and The natural world.
- Expressive arts and design- Creating with materials and Being imaginative and expressive.

Three characteristics of effective learning

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Assessment

Within the first six weeks that a child starts Reception, they will be assessed using The Reception baseline Assessment (RBA). This enables practitioners to plan appropriately in order to meet all needs and abilities.

EYFS Profile statements summarise children's attainment at the end of EYFS. It is based on on-going observation and assessment in the three prime areas of learning, four specific areas of learning and the three characteristics of effective learning as mentioned before.

Phonics teaching and organisation

Discrete phonics lessons are taught 5 days per week in Reception. Children are taught in groups led by the class teacher and teaching assistant. Children are also taught to practise applying their phonics knowledge and skills daily, across the EYFS Curriculum.

The *Read, Write Inc.* phonics scheme is used to deliver a progressive programme of word reading skills.

Autumn term

Reception children learn set 1 sounds and begin set 2. Children explore sounds and develop their listening skills. By the end of set 1 many children should be able to read some VC and CVC words and to spell them. They start to learn to read and spell some high frequency 'tricky' words.

Spring term

Children revise set 2 and some will begin to learn set 3 sounds. Children read and write one grapheme for each of the 44 phonemes. They blend and segment CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant), CCVC and CVCC words for reading and spelling and use their phonic knowledge when trying to read and write more complex words.

Summer Term

Children continue to consolidate and apply their knowledge of set 1-3 sounds.

Children are assessed at the end of each ½ term and sessions are differentiated depending on each child's ability.

Reading

- Child read on a 1:1 basis with an adult once per week. They also have two story sessions a week and 3 quiet reading session where they read books from the class library independently.
- EYFS pupils receive a daily phonics session focusing on decoding, segmenting and blending skills.

Speaking

High priority is based on children's oracy skills on entry and throughout the EYFS.

During each literacy session children are discreetly taught vocabulary and given opportunities to consolidate new vocabulary.

EYFS Practitioners use a range of strategies such as modelling accurate English and vocabulary and recasting children's speech, so that they make progress. Children engage in a range of speaking and listening activities throughout each day. Children are continually encouraged to use taught strategies and participate in activities to ensure they speak in complete sentences and develop their grammar.