

Intent

Our curriculum is an essential part of the cultural capital we know our pupils need so that they can gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they require for success. As part of our curriculum development, we have looked closely at child development, metacognition, building working memory, the early years' curriculum, the characteristics of effective learning, the early learning goals and the national curriculum focusing on expectations at the end of years 1 and 2. This breadth of knowledge has enabled us to create an ambitious curriculum which consistently builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills of all children, whatever their starting points and ensures children are ready for and working towards key stage one.

Our curriculum aims to:

- Offer rich and vibrant opportunities which draw upon children's own experiences and prior learning.
- Support children's personal, social, emotional, spiritual, and cultural development so that they feel safe and secure and are ready to learn.
- Embed the right habits for learning through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:- Play and Exploration, Active Learning and Creative and Critical Thinking.
- Develop and nurture strong, positive attitudes where they become proud and respectful of themselves, others, and their environment.
- Develop the knowledge, skills and understanding appropriate to the stage of development of each child to enable them to flourish and reach their potential.
- Use sequential building of knowledge and skills as essential to lifelong learning
- Enable children to revisit their learning through a range of ways so that they can commit it to their long-term memory
- Continue to build vocabulary as it is a key component to learning. The more words a child knows, and understands, the more confident they become, the easier it will be for them to read and access the rest of the curriculum.
- Support children to make at least good progress from their individual starting points and prepare them for the next stage of their education.

Implementation

Each half term, a new theme is introduced to provide inspiration for learning, whilst having the flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas. Children learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have directed teaching during the day. The timetable changes throughout the year to take into consideration the changing needs of the children. These sessions are followed by small focused group work. This means the teacher can systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new learning. Research has shown that small-group learning improves academic achievement, relationships with other pupils and promotes psychological well-being.

Communication and Language

As part of the baseline assessment, the children are assessed against the Welcomm (Speech and Language) criteria. This enables us to identify and address gaps in learning through regular small group sessions.

We provide opportunities for children to gain new vocabulary through the activities they are engaged in, but also ensure vocabulary is taught explicitly through a range of ways such as modelling when cooking, playing, painting, and reading. The most rapid way for children to increase their vocabulary is through listening to stories, rhymes, and poems that they can internalise, repeat, and commit to long term memory. We are currently trialling the RWI 'Talk Through' Stories Program to develop children's Tier 2 vocabulary.

Phonics and English

We follow the rigorous and highly successful Read, Write Inc program so that the children meet good outcomes for reading and writing. Planned opportunities throughout the day ensure that children revisit and embed their learning. Reading and writing opportunities are available in all areas of learning both indoors and outdoors.

Nursery focus on developing listening skills and developing an awareness of a range of sounds. This then develops into focusing on discriminating between sounds and practising Fred talk. Speaking like Fred helps children to understand that words are made up of sounds and doing this throughout the day helps

children practise blending sounds together. Once this skill has been developed, initial sounds are taught daily through Read, Write Inc sessions during the Summer term.

We have also developed our own suggested text list for Early Years. These texts are chosen for their level of challenge and quality language. They have also been chosen with a view to promoting reading for pleasure.

Maths

The maths curriculum is taught through daily dedicated sessions that are based on the White Rose Maths Scheme of Learning. These sessions are carefully planned using concrete resources and build on prior learning and real-life experiences across the theme and year. The sessions are enhanced through a range of planned independent activities through continuous provision where children are given opportunities to rehearse, review, embed and extend their learning. Pupils learn through games and by using concrete manipulatives which are then rehearsed and applied to their own learning during exploration.

These early mathematical experiences are carefully designed to help pupils remember the content they have been taught and to support them with integrating their new knowledge across the breadth of their experiences and into larger concepts. We want our children to become confident mathematicians who can apply what they have learnt to real life experiences.

During the summer term, the children who are ready, begin to work in books to complete their 5 a day arithmetic problems. In Reception, this consists of addition and subtraction problems.

Wider Curriculum

Our wider curriculum is taught through the learning areas; 'Understanding of the World' and 'Expressive Arts and Design.' Exciting, purposeful and contextual activities are planned to build on children's natural curiosity. For example, building a boat for the Gingerbread Man enables them to think like a 'Scientist' and 'Engineer' as they explore a range of materials and test out their own ideas.

We have carefully plotted out essential knowledge and skills that need to be taught in science, history, geography and art and design so that children are ready for year 1. These skills and concepts are taught through a thematic approach ensuring that children explore, revisit and embed.

Impact

Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that children make at least good progress. Children in our early years, on average, arrive with much lower starting points than national. During their time in our EYFS, children make at least good progress so that we meet the national expectation for *GLD* at the end of the year. Pupils also make good progress toward their age-related expectations before transitioning into Year One. We believe our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside the rigour of assessment and teaching the children have as they move through the early years - a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.

We endeavour for pupils to be Reception and Year 1 ready and prepared for the next phase at primary school. The impact of our curriculum will also, in fact, be measured by how effectively it helps our pupils develop into well rounded individuals who embody our values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens.