

EYFS – Curriculum and Assessment Policies

Reviewed February 2022

In both the Kindergarten classes we are committed to establishing an environment that promotes effective learning in all seven areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. There are three prime areas and four specific areas.

Both classes adhere to the 'Revised (Sept 2012) Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework although, in the Kindergarten II class, learning is extended to national curriculum level for some pupils

In the Kindergarten II class Mathematics and Literacy are planned and taught according to the EYFS and the DFEE Numeracy and Literacy Strategy.

Our Practice

In both the Kindergarten I and Kindergarten II, the curriculum underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- personal, social and emotional well-being
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
- social skills
- attention skills and persistence
- language and communication
- reading and writing
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- physical development
- expressive arts and design

In both settings, a range of strategies are used in teaching and learning and these are adapted to suit the individual needs of each child. Aspects of learning such as exploring, investigating, discovering, rehearsing and repeating are brought together effectively through a wide variety of activities.

In order to ensure effective learning, we provide an environment where children:

- initiate activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from each other.
- learn through movement and their senses
- have time to explore ideas and interests in depth
- feel secure, which helps them to become confident learners
- learn in different ways and at different rates
- make links in their learning
- participate in creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language

We also ensure that children are given the best possible start in life and the chance to achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes as stated in the EYFS.

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

All early years staff have a good understanding of the following four themes and principles set out in the EYFS.

Theme: A unique child

Principle: Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Theme: Positive Relationships

Principle: Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.

Theme: Enabling Environments

Principle: The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning.

Theme: Learning and Development

Principle: Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

In the Kindergarten Department there are many opportunities for well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, to promote learning. Despite a more formal setting in Kindergarten II, the class continues to provide children with free-play to encourage child-initiated learning and structured play-based learning.

Through play-based learning children will be encouraged to:

- explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills
- learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings
- take risks and make mistakes
- think creatively and imaginatively
- communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Areas of Learning

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Prime Area)**

In this area of learning, children are taught about emotional well-being, knowing who they are, where you fit in and feeling good about themselves. It is also about developing respect for others, social competence and a positive disposition to learn.

Our practice:

We aim to teach children to:

- feel safe and secure
- respect themselves and develop a positive self-esteem
- respect those with different cultures and persuasions
- learn about relationships
- develop a positive disposition to learn
- think about and practise problem-solving
- care for themselves and manage their own personal hygiene

Learning in this area will occur during every day activities and situations as well as participation in a number of topic-based activities, specifically designed to encourage the development of the above objectives. In both classes, circle time is part of the daily routine and is sometimes used to encourage children to explore feelings and relationships, along with other aspects of personal, social and emotional development.

- **Communication and Language (Prime Area)**
Literacy (Specific Area)

In this area of learning children are encouraged to develop their language and communication skills by expressing their needs and feelings and interacting with others, establishing their own identities and personalities.

They are also provided with the foundations for reading and writing.

Our practice

We aim to provide children with:

- Opportunities to speak, listen and represent ideas in their activities
- Opportunities to use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum
- An environment rich in print and possibilities for communication
- The early foundations for reading and writing
- Opportunities to explore language in a variety of activities such as reading books, play, sharing stories, songs and rhymes.

In Kindergarten II children are introduced to phonics, focusing on individual grapheme/ phoneme correspondences and much emphasis is on developing a good phonemic awareness. These letter/sound correspondences are built on in class where children are encouraged to use this phonetic approach in both their reading and writing.

The majority of children are usually introduced to reading sometime during their first term in Kindergarten I, although this depends on their development and ability; pre-reading skills taught initially. Children learn to track text correctly, from left to right, top to bottom and, most

importantly, they are expected to discuss the story and answer questions and thus gain an enjoyment of books and reading.

The Kindergarten 1 reading scheme focuses on the first group of high frequency sight recognition words which, in accordance with the National Literacy Strategy are to be taught to all children by the end of the Reception Year.

In Kindergarten II, the children are heard to read at least four times each week and again the main focus is on the 45 high frequency, sight recognition words to be taught by the end of the year. In addition to this the children are encouraged to use their phonic knowledge and other strategies to decode unknown words; great emphasis is placed on developing fluency and understanding.

Both classes end the school day with a whole class story. A variety of texts, fiction and non-fiction, poetry, audio books and stories are delivered, sometimes via the interactive white board. In Kindergarten II, this time may also be used for group storytelling, where each child is asked to contribute ideas towards the story.

Both classes have a book corner which includes a range of fiction and non-fiction books and in the Kindergarten II there is a box containing a selection of books ('I can read' box) which the children are able to attempt independently. They focus on the key sight recognition words and encourage simple phonic word blending. The book corner is available to the children at certain times every morning and on some occasions, during the afternoons.

Pupils in both Early Years classes are given ample opportunities to develop their communication skills with regular participation in Circle Time activities and others such as News Time and Show and Tell where they are encouraged to talk aloud, ask questions and share opinions.

Letter formation and handwriting skills are practised regularly in both classes. The children are taught cursive script from the onset in Kindergarten I. By the time they reach Kindergarten II, we hope the majority can make a recognisable attempt at their name in the cursive script.

Both settings create numerous opportunities for children to engage in mark making and independent writing. Resources to encourage child initiated learning are provided in the role-play area and at the writing and drawing table.

By the end of the Kindergarten II year most children will be able to use phonetic spelling methods and their knowledge of key words to form sentences independently in factual and creative writing.

- **Mathematics (Specific Area)**

In this area of the curriculum, children will begin to learn about numbers and how to solve problems in practical ways. They will learn about shape, size and pattern and develop the skills of counting, sorting, matching, making connections, recognising relationships, calculating and working with numbers. Mathematical understanding is developed through a variety of stories, rhymes, songs, games, imaginative play and real life experiences.

Our practice

We aim to provide children with:

- many different activities, some of which will focus on mathematical development and some of which will draw out the mathematical learning in other activities, including observing numbers and patterns in the environment and daily routines
- purposeful activities that are imaginative and enjoyable and based on real life situations
- an environment that encourages mathematical thinking and opportunities for child-initiated mathematical learning
- confidence to join in and talk about mathematical activities
- an introduction to a range of mathematical vocabulary and opportunities to talk mathematically.

Kindergarten 1 focuses on the following learning concepts throughout the year:

Recognition and formation of numbers 1-10

Counting reliably up to 10 objects

Recognition and naming of 2D shapes (triangle, circle, square and rectangle)

Matching and sorting

Colours, patterns and sequencing

Vocabulary related to mathematical learning

Finding one more

Simple addition to 10 by combining two groups of objects

In Kindergarten 2, these skills are reinforced and extended. Lessons are planned according to the National Numeracy Strategy and EYFS. By the end of the Kindergarten 2 year we hope that the majority of children will be confident in the following:

Using numbers to 20 and beyond,

Carrying out addition and subtraction to and from 20

Using objects and mental strategies

Using their skills to solve practical problems involving number

Calculating, shape, space and measures

Talking about mathematical ideas using and understanding mathematical language.

Both classes combine the use of workbooks and a variety of practical adult directed and child led activities to encourage sound mathematical understanding.

- **Understanding The World (Specific Area)**

In this area of learning we encourage children to develop the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography and Information Technology (IT). It allows the children to explore and investigate objects and materials, encounter creatures, people and plants and question how and why things work. This area of learning also gives children the opportunities to explore cultures and beliefs, including their own.

We aim to provide children with:

- first hand experiences that encourage exploration, observation, problem solving, predication, critical thinking, discussion and decision making.
- an environment that stimulates their interest and curiosity
- practical activities which encourage interaction with each other and adults to gather information for themselves through observation and asking questions
- use of a wide range of IT equipment to support learning
- an outdoor environment which promotes child-initiated learning

We make effective use of the immediate outdoor area and the local environment in a number of ways which include:

nature walks

minibeast hunts

trips to the local park

museums visits

visits to local businesses, such as an estate agent and a bakery.

Trips and activities are often linked to the class topic.

Both classes have their own computer and an interactive whiteboard which are used for adult led teaching and child led learning and once every half term, Kindergarten II children spend a morning working in the computer suite with the specialist ICT teacher. The children are also encouraged to use a range of IT equipment in the role-play area.

- **Physical Development (Prime Area)**

In this area of the curriculum, children are encouraged to improve their skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. Other aspects of physical development are designed to help children gain confidence in their abilities and enable them to feel the benefits of being healthy and active.

Our Practice

We aim to provide children with a variety of activities to aid physical development as follows:

- Activities to develop fine motor skills, such as threading cards, jigsaws and construction toys
- Using the parachute
- Gymnastics
- Dance
- Music and Movement (Sticky Kids and Lets Move)
- Large and small apparatus work to develop basic skills of throwing, catching, balance, control and coordination
- Ballet
- Play scheme
- Regular outdoor activity

- Discussion on being healthy through physical activity and learning about healthy food choices

The children in both classes participate in Sports Day once a year.

- **Expressive Arts and Design (Specific Area)**

This part of the curriculum helps children to make valuable connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding. It includes: Art, Music, Dance, Drama and imaginative play.

Our practice

We aim to provide children with the following opportunities for effective creative development:

- An environment in which creativity, originality and individual expression are valued
- Activities that allow children to respond by using their senses
- Activities which provide pupils with the opportunity to experiment with ideas, materials and behaviour
- Opportunities to work with artists and other creative adults
- Opportunities to create their own work using a range of materials and resources supplied
- Opportunities which encompass religious or cultural beliefs, relating to particular forms of art or methods of representation
- A wide selection of resources from a variety of cultures to stimulate ways of thinking
- Support and guidance, alongside the teaching of new skills and techniques

Both classes perform a Christmas Nativity Play and Kindergarten II children participate in a class assembly once a year.

Assessment

In both the Kindergarten I and Kindergarten II classes, assessment in all areas of learning is carried out through regular observation, discussion with individual children and work-based evidence. These assessments provide the class teachers with an essential planning tool to develop a curriculum appropriate to the *individual* pupil's needs.

In the Kindergarten II class, one-to-one assessments are carried out regularly, throughout the year to monitor progress and to ascertain whether additional support is needed in a particular area or if learning should be extended.

These include the assessment of number formation and recognition, knowledge of grapheme/phoneme correspondences, key sight vocabulary and other literacy and numeracy skills.

From January, spelling assessments are carried out on a weekly basis.

End of term tests are carried out to assess mathematical concepts and independent writing skills.

Both classes undertake observations throughout the day during child led activities and those focused on specific learning areas of learning. An observation/assessment sheet is completed and the information is transferred to each child's assessment booklet.

The assessment booklets are completed in both classes and form a continuous assessment of all seven areas of learning; the booklet also contains the *Foundation Stage Profile* assessment criteria.

Throughout the child's time in Kindergarten I an assessment flower is completed which gives a general overview of the child's current development in all areas.

Booklets require the class teacher to note any areas of concern and other relevant information which provides valuable information for the successive teacher.

In the Kindergarten I class, children begin their 'Learning Journeys' which are continued in Kindergarten II.

Tapestry on line journal is now used in the Early Years Department. Also used for assessment in all areas of learning.