

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is mandatory for all schools. It sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. It is a principled, play based approach.

The Early Years Foundation Stage - There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The three **prime areas** are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and emotional Development

Children are also supported in four specific areas. The **specific areas** are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All areas are equally important and are delivered through planned, purposeful play with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities.

The children are prepared throughout Reception year to ensure they are ready to work on the National Curriculum when they move into Year 1.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development



Successful personal, social and emotional development is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning. We aim to provide the experiences and support to enable children to develop as a rounded and unique individual.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Communication and Language



This area of development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment so that they can develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and speak and listen in a range of situations. You can support at home by allowing your child to talk and listen in an environment with no T.V or radio on. When sharing books you can talk about the pictures and what might happen next in the story. Offer opportunities for your child to talk to other adults - relatives, shop assistants and friends of the family.

Physical Development



Children enjoy moving their bodies whether to music or climbing stairs. Children use large movements in climbing, throwing, running, and small movements in threading beads, painting and cutting. They need control of large movements before they can control the small or fine movements. Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food. At home you can take your child to the park, play ball games or encourage them to ride and scoot about. You could also talk about the food that you eat and what are healthy choices.

- Visit the public library
- Share songs and rhymes
- Point out signs within the environment such as Exit, Danger, Stop.
- Read lots of books with your child, pointing to the words as you read. Your child will see that making sense of these marks on the page happens in a left to right direction that letters look 'right' only one way up and that words can be repeated throughout a text.
- Talk about a story together.
- Involve your child in a conversation. Wait for an answer; resist the temptation to speak for your child.
- Ask questions which are open-ended, for example, "What did you like best today?" rather than "Was school good?" This will encourage decision making and self expression.

Writing

We encourage children to make marks for themselves and set up purposeful opportunities for them to write. Children may start with random lines and squiggles, then they may use letter shapes. This progresses to writing the letter shapes of the sounds they can hear in words and finally to writing captions or sentences using their sound knowledge. You can support at home by children writing shopping lists, writing in birthday cards or by making signs for the house or garden.

Mathematics



This specific area involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and describing shapes, spaces and measures. We engage the children through stories, songs, games and imaginative play so that the children enjoy using and experimenting with numbers, including numbers up to 20.

Things you can do:

- Look for numbers on houses, buses and cars.
- Share songs and rhymes
- Play games such as Snakes and Ladders, Dominoes, Snap etc.
- Use imaginative play to sort and match etc.
- Count things...everything! Make sure you are really counting 'things'. Children often recite numbers in order, but those numbers are meaningless if they are not related to real objects. Point to and count...biscuits on a plate...stairs to bed...ducks on the pond.
- Use phrases such as "how many?", "how much?", "more than", "less than", "the same as", "bigger than" , smaller than" etc.

Understanding the World



In this area of learning, the children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundations for later work in science, design, history, geography, and information and communication technology. It involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe, and find out about people, places, technology, and the environment. The children have opportunities to explore technology

through computers, interactive whiteboards and programmable toys. They experiment and predict in cooking activities and explore 'their world' of family, friends, home and school.

Expressive Arts and Design



This area involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. It provides opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, feelings and ideas through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Children have free access to a range of materials in which they can draw, paint and construct. Role-play areas allow children to take part in imaginative play from pirates to spacemen to parents to shop keepers. The children have opportunities to explore different kinds of music and how instruments can be played.