

Intent

Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum is designed to meet the individual needs of every child.

Our practice is shaped by four guiding principles:

- Every child is a unique child
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

The EYFS curriculum consists of seven areas of Learning and Development.

The three prime areas of learning are:

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

The four specific areas of learning are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World (UTW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

Within the area of UTW, children will begin developing the knowledge and skills that they will then build upon in the National Curriculum subjects of Science, History, Geography, Computing and RE in Key Stages 1 and 2. Through EAD children will begin to explore early concepts and skills that will support future learning in Design and Technology, Music and Art & Design. Personal development, including the promotion of British Values, is at the heart of our curriculum. Children develop their own character and are provided with opportunities to build resilience, independence, confidence and responsibility, whilst learning strategies to support positive physical and mental health.

Implementation

Within the Early Years Framework, there are three characteristics of effective learning which detail the ways that children should be learning from their environment, experiences and activities. These characteristics are split into three main areas:

- 'Playing and Exploring' which shows how the child is engaging
- 'Active Learning' which shows the motivation behind the child's learning
- 'Creating and Thinking Critically' which shows the thought processes behind learning and new achievements

Children should be displaying the characteristics of effective learning every day and in order to make this possible, children need prolonged periods of time in which to lead their own learning through play and exploration. During these periods, children are able to pursue their own interests in an enabling environment supported by skilled staff.

Enabling Environment

Within the EYFS, our environment plays a crucial role in children's development. If the environment is right, it will inspire, motivate and support children's learning, create high levels of involvement and provide challenge in the absence of an adult. Classrooms, both indoors and outdoors, are carefully designed and a variety of high quality, open ended resources are made accessible to the children, so that they can make thoughtful decisions when playing and exploring. Core resources are consistent over weeks and months, so that children know what

will be available and can plan their future learning. Resources are not restricted and children are encouraged to find new ways to use or combine them.

Throughout the environment there are many opportunities for the children to take risks within their play. These risks may be physical or emotional, but they enable the children to push themselves beyond their comfort zones and try new things.

Role of the Adult

At COPA we follow the IB PYP programme, leading children's inquiries across a number of Transdisciplinary Themes. Staff decide on a Central Idea which is then discussed with the children so that their input, ideas and questions create a unique learning journey, based upon their interests and experiences. In order to respond quickly and effectively to children's curiosities and needs, the teaching cycle of observation, assessment, planning, observation is carried out on a moment-by-moment basis. Adults' observations of children at play lead to identification of teaching moments which are acted on immediately, when they will have the biggest impact on the child's development. The role of the adult is to take the teaching to the child, supporting or extending their learning. This teaching takes many forms, including communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges.

Adults also lead group sessions a number of times throughout the day, in order to introduce or teach key concepts, knowledge or skills. These sessions include maths, phonics, stories, singing, social skills and games and the majority of the sessions are practical, hands-on activities for which learning is not written down. Most sessions will be planned in advance but are very flexible depending on children's progress and interests. These sessions also give children the opportunity to learn how to participate in group conversations, listening and speaking at appropriate times. Daily phonics sessions are held, following the Read Write Inc. programme, with children being regularly assessed and grouped based on their attainment.

Records of Learning

In the EYFS we record teaching and learning using Tapestry Online Learning Journals. In order to prioritise positive interactions over evidence collecting, we use a focus child system, with interactions being recorded for 10% of each class per week. The majority of evidence of progress and learning comes from the adults' knowledge and understanding of the individual. In addition, 'wow' moments are added to journals as and when significant or new learning occurs. Each child has their own journal which parents are able to access and contribute to. Prior to each focus week, parents are encouraged to provide information about their child's current interests and any significant events taking place, which feeds into their learning that week. It is also an opportunity to share any questions or concerns regarding children's progress.

Impact

Through monitoring, lesson observations, learning walks and discussions with staff and pupils, school leaders will ensure:

- Children are developing the knowledge and skills required to meet their endpoints (Early Learning Goals)
- Pupils are prepared for their next stage of education

Through purposeful planning, high-quality interactions, formative and summative assessment, teachers will ensure:

- Key knowledge and skills are consolidated before introducing new learning
- Assessment of pupils' learning feeds into planning and adaptation of the curriculum
- Children are displaying the characteristics of effective learning

- Children are developing the knowledge and skills required to meet their endpoints (Early Learning Goals)