

Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils follow the Early Years Curriculum which includes the birth-to-five-years-old requirement. In each age group children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace. We ensure that a carefully planned curriculum is tailored around individual children's interests within the six areas of learning using developmentally appropriate play activities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is divided into themes and commitments around which the pupils work. These are:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

Children's progress is monitored, planned activities are evaluated and regular individual observations are made to help us gain a picture of where each child is in his or her development and so enable us to plan appropriately for the next steps. Through a thematic approach to planning and organisation we are able to provide children with opportunities in each area of learning. Parents are kept informed of themes and topics through curriculum overviews and on the parents' notice boards.

The Kindergarten

The kindergarten class is for children from the age of two, is the perfect gentle introduction to school life. The well resourced, colourful and welcoming classrooms open onto spacious playgrounds providing a safe, outdoor learning environment.

Foundation Stage One

Our FS1 children are beginning the Foundation Stage of their education and are introduced to play-based learning and gain confidence through involvement in department productions and concerts.

Foundation Stage Two

On completion of FS1 children transfer to FS2 where the emphasis is on enjoying learning through creativity and exploration, gaining competence in Language and Maths within the supportive atmosphere of the department.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is divided into six areas, although in practice there is much overlap within in each session.

1. Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

By means of supported practical activities children become familiar with sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting concepts which form the basis of early mathematics. As they use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems children are assisted to learn and use vocabulary of mathematics identifying objects by shape, position, size, volume and number. Songs, games and picture books help children become aware of number sequences and when they are ready to use simple mathematical operations such as addition and subtraction. Maths resources are readily available for all children both indoors and outside

2. Communication, Language and Literacy

In both large and small groups children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening and by hearing and responding to stories, songs and rhymes. Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purpose of writing and when they are ready to use drawn and written symbols themselves. A well stocked book corner gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, able to handle them and become aware of their uses both for reference and as a source of stories and pictures. Children learn sounds and letter recognition through 'jolly phonics' a fun and interactive scheme.

3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are provided with experiences which help them develop a positive sense of themselves and others, social skills and a positive disposition to learn. We support children's emotional well being to help them to know themselves and what they can do. Planned activities promote emotional, moral, spiritual and social development together with intellectual development. Children are encouraged to work and concentrate independently and take part in the life of the group, sharing and co-operating with other children and adults. Children learn acceptable ways to express their own feelings and to have respect for the feelings of others. Children are given opportunity to take responsibility for themselves, others and property. Children learn about other cultures and develop respect for other religions.

4. Knowledge and understanding of the world

A safe stimulating environment allows children to explore and experiment with a range of natural and manufactured materials. They learn to observe the features of objects and substances, recognising differences, patterns and similarities and to share and record their findings. Children are assisted in exploring and understanding the environment both within the group and also in the wider community. A range of safe well maintained equipment enables children to extend their technological understanding using simple tools and techniques as appropriate to achieve their intentions and to solve problems. All children have access to a computer to explore keyboard and mouse activities. They learn to use simple computer programmes specifically designed for the early curriculum.

5. Physical development

The Early Years Foundation pupils have excellent facilities for physical development. For games and activities using apparatus the sports hall is used. The extensive outdoor areas are used daily for gross motor skills. In the individual play areas there is equipment for physical development and co-ordination. Children use the play areas throughout the day with a rota of different equipment for physical development. A high level of adult supervision enables children to create and meet physical challenges safely, developing increasing skills and control to climb, balance and move in a variety of ways. At the same time children are supported in the development of their fine motor skills required to use tools, pencils and scissors with increasing control

6. Creative development

Children are encouraged to use a wide range of resources in order to express their own ideas and feelings. They have many opportunities to use their imagination creatively and respond to their own experiences in two and three dimensions. Using art materials including paint, clay, charcoal, glue and crayons as well as natural and recycled materials children can experiment and explore through open ended activities. Children develop skills in painting, drawing, modelling through being given constant opportunities to experiment. Children join in and respond to music and stories. There are daily opportunities for imaginative role play both individual and as part of a group. The role play area in particular is set up to prompt children's play. It gives them opportunities to engage in imaginary play as well as supporting their imagination.

At the beginning of the Reception Year parents are invited to attend a reading workshop when parents will find out about the way children will begin to read and what they can do to support their children on a daily basis. As the year progresses children will begin to bring pre reading books and later books with a limited vocabulary home to "read" with their parents. We also encourage parents

to regularly visit the library after school and chose books to read at home with their children. Early study skills are developed and “homework” is set according to the needs of individual pupils. Parents are encouraged to assist their children with the activities which are set as homework and to report any difficulties to the class teacher.

There are also Spanish sessions which are led by a Primary Spanish specialist. These are designed to be fun and include stories and songs and encourage pupils who are mother-tongue Spanish to develop their use of Spanish. These sessions also prepare second-language-learners for the Spanish language teaching which is introduced in Year 1.
