



Birches First School

Believe, Grow, Succeed



EYFS Curriculum

Intent

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Birches First School, it is our intent that our ambitious and inclusive curriculum educates all children in knowledge, skills and understanding. We strive to ensure that all our children become effective, inquisitive, curious and independent learners - broadening their wider thinking across all areas of the curriculum.

Fundamental British Values (see below) are at the heart of our curriculum and everything we do. We focus on promoting the more general concepts within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and understand that the children's development within these areas is key to promoting the values in the long term. We endeavour to give the children the **Cultural Capital** (see below) they need for future success i.e. giving each child the best start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their full potential and achieve future success. We are passionate about creating opportunities for children to communicate more easily through developing language and communication skills and specifically exposing them to a broad and rich vocabulary. We wish our children to believe in themselves and their abilities and capabilities, to belong to the school learning community and the wider community and to become successful in their academic career and beyond.

It is our intention that children experience the seven areas of learning through a balance of whole class/group teaching and play based learning. We tailor our teaching to link with the children's interests and use 'in the moment planning' techniques alongside our topics, themes; continuous provision activities; and phonics. Learning is carefully planned by the staff to support Communication and Language Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; and Physical Development as well as Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

We see each child as unique, planning for each child with a 'sequence' in mind, for example, how a child learns to read, - the timing and progress through that sequence will be different for each child. We understand

that some children will go through the sequence in a different order and make accommodations for this. The child is always the starting point in any sequence of learning in any area of learning.

Implementation

At Birches First School, we encourage children to demonstrate their attitudes and behaviours to learning through the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Our curriculum is designed to recognise their prior learning by providing first-hand learning experiences and allowing the children to develop interpersonal skills, build resilience and become creative, critical thinkers to enable them to challenge themselves. We ensure the content of the curriculum is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners and is taught in a logical progression so that children build on prior learning. We plan through a topic-based approach on an annual basis, but these plans are adapted and amended to address the specific needs and interests of each cohort.

We understand that to maintain high standards of quality first teaching, investment in our staff by providing high quality Continued Professional Development (CPD) is essential. CPD priorities are determined based on the needs of individual staff members, the whole team and/or the needs of specific children or groups of children. Teachers and Teaching Assistants in the EYFS team create an environment to match the needs and skill levels of all our children and use their own teacher assessments and gap analysis to inform their planning and the quality provision.

We recognise that language and communication skills are vital to all areas of a child's development. Communication and language development is therefore a consistent focus. We support children's development by providing a language rich environment, where conversations, singing and sharing stories become a regular part of the children's day.

In addition to **Letters and Sounds** (below) we have '**core books**' which we read frequently with the children. These books are the type of books that can be re-visited repeatedly, on different levels to support language development. The intention is that children will develop language and increase vocabulary in addition to gaining a love of books and will become very familiar with these known texts so that they can remember

and re-tell them. By the end of their Early Years journey at Birches children will have had experience of a range of quality texts and authors.

Nursery core books are:

We're Going On a Bear Hunt
Peace at Last
Brown Bear, Brown Bear
The Very Hungry Caterpillar
The Tiger Who Came to Tea
Whatever Next!
Where's My Teddy?
Owl Babies
Handa's Surprise

Reception core books are:

Julia Donaldson stories;

The Gruffalo
The Smartest Giant in Town
Tiddler
Monkey Puzzle
Zog
Stick Man
Room on the Broom

Percy The Park Keeper stories;

After the Storm
The Rescue Party
One Snowy Night
Owl Babies

Spring time stories

The Bad Tempered Lady bird
What the Ladybird Heard
The Hungry Caterpillar
Fairy Tale stories

Pirate stories

Pirates Love Underpants The Night Pirates

We also have 'core rhymes' which further promote and support language development. Each week, a rhyme of the week is chosen, and the children chant or sing the rhyme at group times. By the time, the children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage they are familiar with each core rhyme.

Our core rhymes are:

- Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star
- Hickory Dickory Dock
- Jack and Jill
- Hey Diddle Diddle
- Humpty Dumpty
- Incy Wincy Spider
- Baa Baa Black Sheep
- Mary Mary Quite Contrary
- I'm a Little Tea Pot
- Tommy Thumb
- 12345 Once I Caught a Fish Alive

Our Early year's team considers the holistic development of all children. Our children are immersed a range of practical, first-hand learning experiences through which they are encouraged to explore, experiment and develop their language as they make sense of the world around them. The children use both the indoor and outdoor classroom during teacher directed and child-initiated times. We have a particular love for outdoor learning and each day we go outdoors to learn about our outdoor environment. We offer enhanced outdoor experiences on '**Muddy Mondays**' and '**Wellie Wednesdays**'. Additionally, throughout the year we organise several exciting activities, outings and visits/visitors to enhance the children's learning.

Alongside '**Wellie Wednesday's**', we have '**Woodwork Wednesday's**'. This is when the children have the opportunity to explore our wonderful woodwork areas.

We believe learning through play is vital; we use the environment to ensure the children's needs are met through continuous provision,

enhanced provision and following their interests. Staff teach an objective through whole class and small group teaching sessions as well as by going into provision to observe children's play and move learning forward at that point. They record 'snapshot' evidence of children's learning to build an overall picture and set next steps for learning. Formative assessment takes place within every session and helps staff to identify any children that needs more support to achieve the objective and those that need challenging. This may be instantaneous if appropriate. Our EYFS curriculum provides a secure foundations and prepares them for the next stage in their school journey.

At Birches First School, we believe '*happy children learn*' and the enjoyment of the curriculum promotes achievement, confidence and good behaviour. Our children feel safe to try new things.

Impact

The broad and balanced curriculum design ensures that the needs of all individual children including those identified as EAL, SEND and disadvantaged are met. This is achieved through the blend of our well designed and planned environment, high quality first teaching, responsive adults identifying and moving children on and targeted interventions where appropriate. Through these approached, positive impact on pupil outcomes can be seen. We endeavour for pupils to be ready and well prepared for the next phase in Key Stage One.

The impact of our curriculum is measured by observing children and their interactions. We skilfully utilise 'In the Moment Planning' techniques and use Tapestry digital observations to record children's learning and identify next steps. Our assessment procedures allow us to measure outcomes against all schools nationally. We measure the percentage of pupils achieving age related expectations by the end of the EYFS. 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.

Fundamental British Values

Fundamental British Values are at the heart of everything we do at Birches First School. There are four British Values that we promote: **Rule**

of Law, Individual Liberty, Democracy, Mutual tolerance and respect. These four values all fit within the categories of Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) and Understanding of the World (UTW). We focus on promoting the more general concepts within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and understand that the children's development within these areas is key to promoting the values in the long term.

Rule of Law - understanding rules	Individual Liberty - freedom for all
<p>Help children understand boundaries and acceptable behaviour</p> <p>Help children think about keeping safe away from danger</p> <p>Ensure that children understand their own and other's behaviour and the consequences and learn to distinguish right from wrong</p> <p>Collaborate with children to create the rules and the codes of behaviours e.g. the rules about tidying up and that children understand rules apply to everyone</p> <p>Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSED) Managing feelings and behaviour</p>	<p>Help children understand that they have the right to feel safe and not frightened</p> <p>Help children to understand feelings and teach the language of feelings</p> <p>Teach children to say 'no' if they don't like/want to do something</p> <p>Encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand that we are free to have different opinions</p> <p>Develop a positive sense of themselves. Provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem, and increase their confidence in their own abilities</p> <p>Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSED) Self- Confidence and Self-Awareness</p> <p>Understanding of the World People and Communities</p>
Democracy - making decisions together	Mutual tolerance and respect - treat others as you want to be treated

<p>Build children's self-esteem, self-awareness and self confidence</p> <p>Build children's ability and willingness to say what they want/need and to speak up for themselves knowing they will be listened to</p> <p>Support the decisions that children make and provide opportunities that allow taking turns, sharing and collaboration</p> <p>Respect each other's views and values and talk about their feelings e.g. when they need/don't need help</p> <p>Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSED) Self- Confidence and Self-Awareness</p>	<p>Help children deal with conflicts by talking, explaining their motives and negotiating e.g. help with sharing toys</p> <p>Teach children to treat others as they would want to be treated themselves</p> <p>Share stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources, activities and trips that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping</p> <p>Teach the children about cultural events and festivals</p> <p>Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSED) Managing feelings and behaviour</p> <p>Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSED) Making relationships</p> <p>Understanding of the World People and Communities</p>
--	--

For further information, please see the Fundamental British Values Policy on the school website.

Phonics

Letters and Sounds

We use the Letters and Sounds Phase 1 materials in Nursery to promote, encourage and enhance children's early phonics skills. It is very important that children are able to discriminate between different sounds before being able to sound them out verbally. There are seven aspects to Phase 1 which develop throughout the Nursery year and beyond.

Throughout Phase 1 of Letters and Sounds, children will:

- develop their language structures;
- increase their vocabulary;
- begin to distinguish between sounds in words;
- speak clearly and audibly;
- become familiar with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration;
- listen attentively;
- explore and experiment with sounds and words;

Activities to support learning in Phase 1 include:

- storytelling;
- singing songs;
- listening to rhymes and repeating patterns and refrains;
- playing alliterative games;
- using creative language in role play, drama and dance;
- identifying sounds in names, words in the environment etc.

In Reception, there is an emphasis on Phase 2 and Phase 3 whilst continuing to practise and embed the skills learnt during Phase 1.

In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters is taught each week, in the following sequence:

Set 1: s, a, t, p

Set 2: i, n, m, d

Set 3: g, o, c, k

Set 4: ck, e, u, r

Set 5: h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss

As soon as each set of letters is introduced, children will be encouraged to use their knowledge of the letter sounds to blend and sound out words. For example, they will learn to blend the sounds s-a-t to make the word **sat**. They will also start learning to segment words. For example, they might be asked to find the letter sounds that make the word **tap** from a small selection of magnetic letters.

By the time they reach Phase 3, children will already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters taught in Phase 2.

Over the twelve weeks which Phase 3 is expected to last, twenty-five new graphemes are introduced (one at a time).

Set 6: j, v, w, x

Set 7: y, z, zz, qu

Consonant digraphs: ch, sh, th, ng

Vowel digraphs: ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er

During Phase 3, children will also learn the letter names using an alphabet song, although they will continue to use the sounds when decoding words.

Tricky words

During Phase 3, the following tricky words (which can't yet be decoded) are introduced:

- he
- she
- we
- me
- be
- was
- you
- they
- all
- are
- my
- her

Cultural Capital

At Birches First School, we believe that Cultural Capital is about giving each child the best start in life and the support needed to enable them to fulfil their full potential and achieve future success. We recognise that children arrive at our Nursery/Reception having had different experiences to others, and we aim to address any inequalities so that children are not limited by their social or economic circumstances. We see each child as an individual and tap into their interests in order to build upon their knowledge and skills, and introduce them to aspects of our wonderful world that are new to them or have yet to experience.

It is our intention to provide a curriculum which develops language, specifically teaches vocabulary, enhances and broadens experiences and opportunities for all children, particularly for our most vulnerable young learners. Our curriculum is pitched so that it offers a range of experiences, both indoors and outdoors, which engage, enthuse and enlighten. Our intention is to provide a culture of curiosity through magical moments and to support the children to develop the dispositions and attitudes that enable them to learn effectively. We believe that if all children have the opportunity to become good at learning, this will prepare them for future success.

Adults within the Early Years team have a wealth of experience, which means high quality delivery of our intentions is possible and successful. This includes: forging strong relationships; working with other professionals; working with parents and the wider community; being highly inclusive; meeting children's needs; learning styles and interests; understanding the individual and diverse ways that children develop and learn; and their knowledge and understanding in order to actively support and extend children's learning in and across all seven areas of learning. We communicate with parents face to face regularly, and 'Evidence Me', our online learning journal helps us to seek parent's opinions about their child and facilitate shared experiences.

We are reflective in our practice and continually seek to develop and adapt our offer to ensure that we remain focused in our ambition to give our children the essential knowledge that they need to prepare them for future success.

N Stubbs
EYFS Leader
September 2020