

Foundation Stage Curriculum at Holywell C of E Primary School

Children in Foundation Stage are taught through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child initiated activities. Staff respond to children's needs and interests by planning activities which reflect the different ways that children learn.

Four principles shape practise in early years settings -

- 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**

There are 7 areas of learning that form the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The 3 prime areas are

- communication and language – speaking and listening in a range of situations
- physical development – being active and interactive, developing coordination, control and movement, the importance of physical activity and making healthy food choices
- personal, social and emotional development – forming positive relationships, developing respect for others, developing social skills, managing their feelings, understanding appropriate behaviour and to have confidence in their own abilities

The 4 specific areas are

- literacy – linking sounds and letters to begin to read and write
- mathematics – developing skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, simple addition and subtraction, describing shapes, space and measures
- understanding the world – making sense of their physical world and their community, finding out about people, places, technology and the environment
- expressive arts and design – exploring and playing with a wide range of media and materials, through art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology

Practitioners reflect on and plan for the different ways that children learn -

- playing and exploring – engagement
- active learning – motivation
- creating and thinking critically – thinking

The classroom is organised into well-resourced learning zones, both inside and outside, from which children can choose or add to the resources they need. The children have free-flow access to the outside area which reflects the learning inside where there is a large carpet space and areas for sand, water, role play, reading corner, mark making, malleable materials, construction, interactive whiteboard, snack, and creative activity. Outdoors will be found sand, water, gravel, digging area, a stage and instruments, a woodwork area, muddy kitchen, role play, mark making, tyre swing, rope walkway, logs, tyres, planks, space hoppers, trees, dens and more!

Children arrive in the setting from 8.35a.m. They unpack their bags, sort their belongings, change reading books and begin their independent play. The door to outside is opened once the register is completed. Parents/Carers are welcome to 'stay and play' any day or time as they choose and parent/carer helpers are encouraged to join the class.

Phonics – we use our Holywell Structured Synthetic Phonics scheme to teach phonics at Holywell. The children start daily phonics lessons once they attend full time (approximately within the first two weeks of the start of term). Sounds are introduced daily through a high quality text, in a fun, multi-sensory way that involves and interests all children. The children are taught to blend and segment words to read and spell, to learn to read and spell tricky words and to form letters correctly using 'sparkle mark' sayings that are linked to the texts we use. The children revise the taught sounds each day and have opportunities to practise their phonic skills through activities set up in the class and outside area. Sounds are sent home for children to practise with their family.

Reading – the children are encouraged to develop a life long love of books and reading. Through small guided groups, individually and in continuous provision they practise their sounds, make and read words, read tricky words, read simple captions and eventually take home reading books. The children read a phonetically decodable book suitable to their development. Parents/Carers have a home/school book to write comments in each week and a 'Henry Bookworm' book track to complete when they share books at home with their child. The children are presented with a book to keep once they have read 100 books.

Maths – children have short, daily maths lessons as a class and opportunities to apply new skills through classroom activities. The children use counting materials to support their learning. Other Maths resources are available for the children to use in their play and adults support the children's individual learning as they play together, modelling vocabulary and extending their learning. The children are given maths challenges to complete at home, which parents upload to Seesaw. We follow the NCETM mastering number programme and use Numberblocks to support our maths teaching.

Forest School – the children in Foundation class have weekly Forest School sessions throughout the year, both on site and at 'Millfields', where there is a safely enclosed wood just a 10 minute walk away (the Parish Council has granted permission for use by the school). The children are involved in self chosen activities such as den building, bug hunting, climbing trees, fire lighting, toasting marshmallows, muddy kitchen, making swings, collecting leaves etc. Our Foundation Stage lead teacher is a Level 3 Forest School Leader and 'Champion' with the Local Authority.

Transition – Pre-School children join the Foundation Stage class in small groups twice a week from the Summer term. Parents are invited to a workshop to inform them about starting school and how to support their child's learning. At the end of Foundation Stage the children visit the Year 1 class to meet the teacher and get to know the classroom. Most children transfer to us from Holywell and Needingworth Pre-School, which is sited within the school buildings (but privately run). This setting achieved an 'Outstanding' Ofsted grading at its last inspection.

Assessment – Children are assessed regularly about what they know and how they learn. Assessments are made through observing the children as they play. This information enables

staff to plan for each child's next steps in learning and also informs the Year 1 staff about their readiness for the next year of school, including interests and how each individual learns best. These assessments can be seen in the children's learning journey evidenced on Seesaw. Parents/Carers are invited to discuss their child's progress at consultation meetings in the Autumn and Spring term and receive an end of year written report.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

British Values

The children in EYFS talk about British Values during circle times. Regular opportunities are provided for voting on ideas to recognise democracy. Daily discussion following on from independent learning, regularly addresses mutual respect and individual liberty. The characteristics of effective learning form the basis for these discussions.

Cultural Capital

We aim to provide a rich and stimulating curriculum that excites and engages the children. The children have a wide range of opportunities during their year in reception. They listen to a wide range of high quality texts, they do weekly Forest School, they look after the class guinea pigs and take them home at the weekend if they wish. They find out about and celebrate a range of festivals including Diwali, Christmas, Chinese New Year and Easter. The children work with an artist during art week and authors and illustrators during book week. They are able to observe and care for ducklings, observing the eggs as they hatch in an incubator. The children help raise money for this by doing a sponsored puddle jump. They watch caterpillars turn from a chrysalis to a butterfly, take part in Sports Day and perform a Nativity play. They explore the village, visiting the local park, café and church. The children develop a love of and confidence in reading and writing and become confident mathematicians.