

Early Years and Key Stage 1 Curriculum Areas

Characteristics of Effective Learning	
<p>Characteristics of Effective Learning</p> <p><i>Playing and Exploring</i></p> <p><i>Active Learning</i></p> <p><i>Creating and Thinking Critically</i></p> <p><i>Relationships and Wellbeing</i></p>	<p>The Characteristics of Effective Learning are the characteristics learners require in order to be successful in their learning. These skills are not hierarchical – one set of skills does not necessarily come before the other. They are also continually developing – sometimes these characteristics may be evident in a learner’s play, other times they may not. Characteristics include aspects of Playing and Exploring such as playing with what they know, trying new things, and finding out what they do and don’t like through exploring and experiencing. Active Learning includes the characteristics that enable learners to become drivers on their own learning journey – staying with activities for longer, showing perseverance when things are hard and resilience when they go wrong, and being proud when they achieve what they set out to do. Creating and Thinking Critically is all about having their own ideas, deciding how to do things and building their schemas – how do things work? How does it relate to things I already know, what is the same and what is different? What happens if...? Finally, Relationships and Wellbeing encompasses the characteristics that enable learners to feel confident and happy as an individual, to know and like who they are, and to build positive relationships with those around them.</p> <p>Through observations of their play, we gain an insight into the characteristics each individual learner shows consistently and which they need more opportunities to develop. This is then used to tailor the provision and plan play opportunities which challenge learners to develop these characteristics.</p>
Prime Areas of Learning	
<p><i>The three Prime Areas of Learning in the Early Years provide the foundation of learning upon which learners’ entire journey through life is built. These begin from birth and continue to the developmental age of 5 years. Within these Prime Areas are the skills and knowledge fundamental to children’s development, including their ability to build and form relationships, regulate themselves, and communicate, as well as their physical development.</i></p>	
<p>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</p> <p><i>Building Relationships</i></p> <p><i>Managing Self</i></p>	<p>Children’s personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial to enabling them to build positive relationships with those around them, to being able to regulate through challenging experiences and strong emotions, and to develop key life skills and independence.</p> <p>We provide strong, warm and positive relationships with adults to support learners in developing their regulation skills. This begins with co-regulation; well-regulated adults providing the calm, safe space for a learner to share when they are experiencing heightened emotions, for which they do not yet have the skills to manage and regulate through alone.</p>

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<p><i>Self-Regulation</i></p>	<p>Through this co-regulation process, and the modelling of the language of emotions, learners can begin to develop their regulation skills so that they are able to begin to identify and manage these feelings with increasing independence, including identifying strategies they know might help them, (i.e. I can ask for help when I am cross, I can take a break if I am worried). As they progress, learners begin to develop the ability to identify how others might be feeling, supporting them to understand that their actions have an impact on how others might feel. Through guided play and structured games and activities, learners are provided with support in developing these social skills, including how to take turns, cooperate with others and, ultimately, how to build and sustain positive relationships with peers.</p> <p>Within PSED, the sub-area of ‘Managing Self’ covers the fundamental self-care skills required for learners to develop their independence. To support their development within this area, learners engage in a variety of activities to build the pre-requisite skills, such as their fine motor or planning and organising skills, to be able to master self-care tasks and gain a sense of achievement when they are able to manage aspects of their day independently. This looks different for every learner but it is of great importance that every step towards independence is celebrated.</p>
<p>Communication and Language</p> <p><i>Speaking</i></p> <p><i>Listening and Attention</i></p> <p><i>Understanding</i></p>	<p>The development of communication and language underpins all seven areas of learning and development within the EYFS. Back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. Not only is it of paramount importance that our learners develop their ability to communicate their wants, needs, thoughts, feelings and preferences, ultimately the ability to understand what is being asked and convey their own understanding of this is fundamental in later subject-specific learning. Communication is embedded in all that we do – learners’ communication systems are integrated into tasks and activities inside and outside the classroom to ensure learners are continually developing their ability to communicate. This is not only key to their success as they move through school, it is also fundamental to their ability to self-advocate and to be independent.</p> <p>Due to the varying needs of our learners, it is essential that in this area of the curriculum framework we adopt an individualised approach. A Total Communication approach is used at all times. This will include using tactile, auditory and visual information in which all means of communication is valued and used to support and enhance expressive and receptive language.</p> <p>Our Total Communication environment includes; gestures, facial expressions and body language, eye pointing, objects of reference, Speech, Makaton signing, photos, visuals (including PECS), and high tech AAC. Communication approaches must be carefully differentiated towards the individual with the aim being that it is functional.</p>
<p>Physical Development</p> <p><i>Fine Motor Skills</i></p>	<p>Gross motor skills are those involving the larger muscles used to move the arms, legs and torso in a functional manner – sitting, standing, crawling, running, skipping, climbing etc. Fine motor skills refers to those skills involving the use of the</p>

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<p><i>Gross Motor Skills</i></p>	<p>small muscles and their ability to work with the brain and nervous system in order to control movements in areas such as their hands and fingers, lips and tongue, in order to do things such as draw or write, pull up their zip and eat.</p> <p>Learners' development of these skills is supported through activities which aim to improve dexterity, coordination and control in large and small motor movements. These activities are increased incrementally, exploring a variety of sensory-based activities initially to develop learner strength and coordination and positional awareness. Activities for this area are delivered both indoors and outdoors to support transferable skills. Activities and provision are tailored to integrated therapy plans and are bespoke to each learner's level of development. It is key that learning is understood developmentally and physical activities are broken down in to smaller tasks in order to promote success.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Specific Areas of Learning</u></p> <p><i>The Specific Areas of Learning are closely linked to subject specific learning. All learners will have access to elements of this curriculum framework as they are part of our Early Years continuous provision – the provision which is available to learners all day, every day. All learners will be supported to access elements of subject specific learning at their developmental level. Learners working comfortably at 22-36 months (EYFS age bands) in all three Prime Areas may begin to access a larger proportion of subject specific learning delivered through adult-led sessions. Their understanding of language, regulation and listening and attention skills will have developed to allow them to understand what is expected, sustain their attention, and regulate through these sessions. Those learners not yet ready for this will continue to receive a rich, well-rounded, developmentally appropriate curriculum inclusive of all subject specific areas through a child-led, play-based approach, encompassing the use of Engagement Scales.</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Maths</p> <p><i>Number Numerical Patterns Shape, Space and Measure</i></p>	<p>Through a maths-rich environment, learners have exposure to, and opportunities to practice and consolidate upon, maths concepts and skills throughout the curriculum, including through play, songs, stories and rhymes. Learners' development of concepts key to their later understanding of mathematical concepts is supported through play – their ability to understand object permanence (that something exists even when out of sight), the concepts of 'one' versus 'lots' as experienced through 'lots of balls' falling around them, then just 'one', repeatedly. It is further supported through Waldon which builds upon these early Maths skills – building their 'learning to learn' skills whilst also exploring one to one correspondence, matching, sorting, exploring shape, space and measure through posting, and later, creating patterns.</p> <p>Later development in Maths is supported through a multi-sensory, play-based curriculum. Learners explore the concepts of numbers with visual representations in the form of Numicon shapes. They learn the shape and feel of each number and how it corresponds to its order in relation to other numbers, and the quantity it represents. These same Numicon shapes later support the development of concepts such odd/even and more/less. As their skills within the Prime Areas develop, learners begin to deepen their Maths knowledge through adult-led sessions and activities, although these remain developmentally appropriate and incorporate learners' interests to promote engagement.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Literacy</p> <p><i>Comprehension</i></p>	<p>Early Reading begins with learners' ability to attach meaning to an object, symbol or picture. This development is supported continuously through the use of Objects of Reference and symbols. Later, the development of early reading</p>

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<p><i>Word Reading</i></p> <p><i>Writing</i></p>	<p>and pre-phonics skills is supported through activities which are targeted at promoting learners' visual and auditory memory and discrimination. Auditory memory and discrimination refers to their ability to hear, remember and discriminate between different sounds around them which later allows them to hear the different speech sounds that make up words. These skills are supported through games such as listening lotto or hidden instrument games. Visual memory and discrimination skills refer to learners' looking closely and examining what they see – what is the same and what is different? Activities such as puzzles, matching pairs, and sorting games are planned to support learners to develop these skills. This later helps the development of their phonemic awareness (their ability to focus on and manipulate the sounds in spoken words) which is key to success when they begin their Phonics journey through Read Write Inc. (RWI). Learners are gradually introduced to letters that hold personal meaning to them, such as those within their names, before commencing formal RWI sessions which deliver phonics through a systematic, synthesising approach (letters are taught in an order which allows learners to begin decoding words (breaking them down into individual sounds) and blending words (combining the sounds to read the word) within the first set of sounds taught, i.e. Set 1: m, a, s, d, t – mat, dad, sad, sat).</p> <p>Learners are supported to develop a love of reading through exposure to a rich variety of texts in a range of ways including picture books, sensory stories, story massage, poems and rhymes. These texts are planned and sequenced to ensure progression from learners' first year in Early Years all the way to the end of their academic journey at Kennel Lane. Repetition of texts is planned and purposeful, allowing learners to revisit familiar stories whilst deepening their understanding of them. In Early Years and Key Stage 1, learners experience reading individually and in small groups through a multi-sensory approach.</p> <p>Early mark-making and writing skills are promoted through play-based learning and 'Squiggle', a multi-sensory early writing programme which promotes high levels of engagements in learners of all ages and developmental stages, focusing on the link between gross motor and fine motor skills which form the foundation for successful future writing.</p>
<p>Understanding the World</p> <p><i>People and Communities</i></p> <p><i>Past and Present</i></p> <p><i>The Natural World</i></p>	<p>This area links closely to later learning in Science and the Humanities (History, Geography and Religious Education). It focuses on the development of learners' understanding of the world around them. This includes the way in which people can be similar and different, in appearances, preferences, gender, beliefs, disabilities, occupations and more. It supports learners to have an inclusive and respectful mindset when considering peoples' differences and to celebrate their own. Understanding the World also encompasses concepts such as change and processes – learners experience their natural world, noticing, observing and engaging with processes and phenomena such as freezing and melting, growth and forces. Within this area, learners are also supported to develop their internal timeline, gaining an early understanding of chronology and how things change over time.</p>

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	<p>Through our Topic curriculum, learners have the opportunity to partake in a half termly 'memorable experience', allowing them to broaden their view of the world and engage in community activities, such as with visitors from the community or trips out. As in all areas of learning, learning within this area is multi-sensory, child-led and play-based. Provision such as our weekly Forest School sessions provide explorative opportunities out in nature, supporting learners to develop their understanding of and relationship with the natural world.</p>
<p>Expressive Arts and Design</p> <p><i>Creating with Materials</i></p> <p><i>Being Imaginative and Expressive</i></p>	<p>Learners are supported to develop their expression, imagination and creativity through child-led and adult-led activities linked to the Topic. Development within this area is crucial to their social, emotional, linguistic and cognitive development as it allows them to explore and use new vocabulary and structures, generate ideas, conceptualise how others may be thinking or feeling, explore concepts and themes outside their usual experience, and, ultimately, create. Expressive Arts and Design also links to later Employability, a key aspect of our TALENTS curriculum, as it allows them to explore the roles and responsibilities within different occupations through roleplay. Roleplay also provides an avenue for learners to explore scenarios they may experience in their own lives and the ways in which they may respond, increasing their confidence and enabling them to build their social skills.</p> <p>Guided play enables learners to begin to engage in pretend play with modelling from adults. Small world toys encourage story-telling, collaboration with peers, construction and the exploration of themes such as conflict and morality. Learners have opportunities throughout each day, as part of our continuous provision, to explore a wide variety of tools and media, exploring colours, shapes, patterns and textures. They are encouraged to have their own ideas and consider what they will need to achieve them, as well as to freely explore without a predetermined end goal. Music is embedded throughout the curriculum, in addition to daily singing sessions and weekly Musical Interaction sessions providing learners with opportunities to explore a variety of instruments whilst also developing their early social and communication skills through Intensive Interaction. Later, learners develop the auditory memory and discrimination skills key to their reading journey through the exploration of patterns of sounds using different instruments. This, in addition to the joy and pleasure learners gain through engaging in the arts.</p>