Etchingham CE Primary School/Riverside Federation
EYFS: Intent, Implementation, Impact

INTRODUCTION

The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to 5 years, but we believe that this is a floor and not a ceiling for children's learning at Etchingham School/Riverside Federation. We have an ambitious vision for the children in our care. It is our aim that every child meets the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) at the end of Reception but we also want our children to develop the skills and knowledge that will help them to meet the many challenges that lie ahead and to develop a love of learning that will engage and inspire curiosity along the way.

EYFS: INTENT

Our EYFS curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning both from previous settings and their experiences at home. We work in partnership with parents, carers and other settings to provide the best possible start at Etchingham School/Riverside Federation, ensuring each individual reaches their full potential from their various starting points. We aim to offer a child-centred curriculum, which is designed to enable all pupils to make progress from their starting point in Reception. Our whole school Learning Journeys aim to engage and stimulate a love of learning in our pupils through genuine collaboration and building on children's interests.

We recognise that the Prime Areas of learning (Communication and Language, Personal Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development) form the foundations of children's ability to access the Specific Areas of learning (Maths, Literacy, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design).

Prime Area: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Through a commitment to the development of self-regulation, confidence and resilience, we aim to develop warm and positive relationships with the children and to encourage them to develop equally effective relationships with their peers. We expect the children to work together harmoniously, sensitively and always with an understanding that they are part of something bigger than themselves.

Prime Area: Communication and Language

We recognise the fundamental importance of developing language and communication skills. Spoken language not only improves academic outcomes and shapes executive function but also equips children to meet the challenges that lie ahead. We want our children to be able share their ideas and express their opinions using newly acquired vocabulary with confidence and in the knowledge that they are warmly supported and encouraged by staff and fellow pupils alike.

Prime Area: Physical Development

By the time they move on to Year 1, we want our children to have developed the fine motor skills, strength and stamina to express themselves through competent and confident writing. Through access to our enabling environment, both inside and out, we aim to support the children in their own individual next steps to develop core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility.

Specific Area: Literacy

We want our children to develop a love of reading and to become storytellers in their own right. Being able to sequence events and understand basic narratives not only helps to shape and guide the development of executive function (crucial for future academic success) but also develops communication, language and vocabulary and in turn children's confidence. Through our systematic synthetic phonics teaching we aim that our children will be secure in Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the government's Letters and Sounds sequence (moving to Phase 4 if the children are ready), they will blend sounds for writing and segment words for reading. We expect all of our children to be equipped with the skills to support the writing of full sentences including capital letters, finger spaces and full stops.

Specific Area: Mathematics

Our mathematics teaching aims to encourage flexible and agile mathematical thinking. We want all of our children to develop a 'maths mastery orientation' alongside the specific requirements of the Early Learning Goal for mathematics, which will lay the foundations for our whole-school commitment to maths mastery.

Specific Area: Understanding the World

Understanding the world that we live in is so much more than the development of an understanding of different animals, cultures, climates and landscapes. We want our children to develop their cultural capital during their time with us in Reception and to appreciate beauty in the natural world around them. We want our children to be able to identify and solve their own problems, from pulling up a sticky coat zip to working out how they can make a boat that floats, discovering the joy of learning along the way and developing resilience to setbacks.

Specific Area: Expressive Arts and Design

There is little that is quite as satisfying as making or creating something that works in the way that you planned or expressing yourself, your place in the world and your feelings through a painting, drawing or song. We aim to equip our children with the knowledge and skills they need to express themselves creatively and to help them develop the initiative to inspire their own creations.

EYFS: IMPLEMENTATION

The curriculum is supported and enhanced by a carefully considered, stimulating and enabling environment of continuous provision both indoors and out, offering a variety of challenge for all pupils across the seven areas of the EYFS. Our provision changes and evolves with the requirements and the progression of the children's skills offering appropriate challenge for all ability levels. We believe a good balance between adult directed focused learning and uninterrupted child-initiated play with sensitive interactions from adults ensures the best outcomes for pupils encouraging them to investigate, question, debate and challenge.

We develop effective partnerships with parents and carers through, 'meet the teacher' presentations, parent consultations, reading records and our use of Tapestry, the online learning journal which allows parents to instantly access their child's learning and development and next steps. This also provides invaluable feedback about the children's achievements out of school.

We engage in a rigorous but sensitive baseline assessment of all pupils throughout their free play and exploration in the first few weeks of Reception in order to measure the impact of our

teaching and learning throughout the Reception year from their starting point. Each area of development is plotted into a series of objective-led planning documents to enable all EYFS staff to support and measure the children's progress against specific objectives.

Prime Area: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We implement a firm set of Golden Rules right from the start of the year, which are introduced and embedded through story, role play and circle time. We also explicitly teach the management and recognition of emotions through a simplified version of the Zones of Regulation helping to hone and develop the children's emotional literacy and their good mental health. The children are rewarded for their consistent following of the rules and we regularly revisit the values that the rules represent during our whole-school PSHE sessions (Jigsaw).

Prime Area: Communication and Language

The development of communication and language is prioritised as one of the most important areas of focus in Reception at Etchingham School/Riverside Federation. Regular time to talk as a whole class is highly valued and timetabled into the school day. We avoid the 'hands up' method wherever we can and favour partner talk to develop and build the children's relationships with each other and their confidence. Likewise, our sensitive interactions and sustained shared thinking with the children during their free flow play helps to build and strengthen our adult/child relationships, crucial for developing the trust and confidence that will enable them to communicate freely. Vocabulary is always introduced and explored within each new whole-school learning journey and we have adopted elements of the 'Talk Through Stories' scheme to help deliver systematic vocabulary development. We screen all of the Reception children using Speech and Language Link software and ensure that any gaps are addressed by regular timetabled interventions.

There are a wide variety of opportunities for the children to engage in role-play and story telling to develop their communication and language and to retell stories throughout continuous provision, such as the small world area, the role-play area and the home corner in the cottage. We encourage the children to use full sentences whenever they express themselves in a group, starting in the autumn term by echoing back what the children have said using a full sentence. During our early morning work we often enjoy games that require the children to use only the spoken word. This is a very powerful method of exercising the children's ability to provide well-structured descriptions using adjectives and positional language.

Prime Area: Physical Development

We follow the Val Sabin 'ACTIVATE' programme as a whole school - a twice-daily short burst of targeted exercises. The skills that are learned in Reception are carefully planned to develop children's strength, balance and coordination in preparation for Year 1. We also follow the Val Sabin P.E. scheme of work, a comprehensive programme of physical education that prepares the children for the PE curriculum in KS1. The children also have plenty of opportunities to develop their fine motor and gross motor skills throughout continuous provision. Children with developmental delay in their fine motor skills are identified early and are included in intervention activities and monitored closely to ensure that they are ready for the writing requirements of the Y1 curriculum.

Specific Area: Literacy

Inspired by our termly Learning Journey focus, the children are exposed to a rich diet of fiction and non-fiction texts, poetry and songs throughout the day. For example, most direct teaching moments will be introduced with or enhanced by a text, including 'starting with a story' for the majority of our short teacher-led maths sessions. Through our circle time sessions, we discuss and explore these texts together encouraging partner talk to explore questions and comments. These texts often form the springboard for further learning and exploration within the Learning Journey.

Our termly planning will often include a single focus text that will be explored in depth throughout the term. Activities will incorporate drawn story mapping and 'Talk 4 Write' inspired

by the work of Pie Corbett, helping to bring to life the story sequence, storytelling conventions, narrative structures and to embed new vocabulary.

We engage in the storytelling initiative, 'Helicopter Stories'; a process that encourages children to invent and act out their own narratives. It is now widely accepted that if a child knows eight nursery rhymes by heart by the time they are four years old, they are usually among the best readers and spellers in their class by the time they are in Year 3. We are committed to learning a poem a week, inspired by the scheme of learning, 'The Poetry Basket'. The short poems are supported by clear actions and movements and often relate to the wildlife, changes in the natural world and the weather of each related season.

Through our systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) teaching and introduction to letter formation and sentence writing, our children are encouraged and enabled to begin their journey as writers of their own stories and adventures. In Reception, we follow LCP SSP planning combined with resources from Twinkl and Phonics Play, which are consistent with and fully support the transition to Y1. All reading scheme books are aligned with the phonics teaching and are fully decodable. An adult reads with each child every week in school. We communicate with parents through the children's reading journals to ensure support is given and any problems are addressed as soon as possible. Our whole-school handwriting scheme of learning supports the very beginnings of letter formation in the EYFS all the way through to fully cursive and fluent handwriting in Key Stage 2.

Specific Area: Mathematics

We have chosen to follow the White Rose Maths Mastery Scheme of Learning in Reception and Year 1 to support transition to our whole school maths scheme: 'Maths, No Problem!' White Rose Maths offers an appropriate level of support for our younger pupils and offers 'small steps' progression, using a range of concrete materials and learning through play to ensure that all children make progress. Through our short teacher-led inputs and our interactions with the children using sustained shared thinking throughout the supporting enabling environment, the children have the opportunity to explore and consolidate their developing skills and knowledge within activities that engage and interest them.

Specific Area: Understanding the World

We investigate a range of religions, cultures, habitats, seasonal changes and life on earth throughout our termly Learning Journeys. We also explore these areas through our RE scheme of learning (The Emmanuel Project), our PSHE scheme of learning (Jigsaw) and our regular Forest School sessions. Our scientific enquiry is also aligned closely with our learning journeys and we plan to explore a range of scientific processes offering plenty of scope for exploring the children's interests and enabling the children to fully engage in their learning. For example, during our Egyptian Learning Journey, we thought about what we would need to design a boat that would float to save us from 'The Enormous Crocodile.' We consider the weather as a class daily using our interactive calendar and weather station, equipped with books and resources to help the children make observations.

The development of an understanding of the past and present is woven into our Learning Journey planning and is usually explored through a focus rich text. For example, during our Learning Journey centred around the Stone Age, our class text 'The First Drawing' and a visit to the Kent Museum of Life, where we experienced first hand the ways of life of a stone age human, inspired many further Learning Journey activities such as making stone age clay pots, weapons and shelters.

In preparation for Year 1, we begin to explore the lives of significant individuals related to our Learning Journey focus, such as Howard Carter, Neil Armstrong and Mary Anning. Such individuals are introduced to the children and explored in a playful and engaging manner often through role-play and story.

Specific Area: Expressive Arts and Design

The progression of skills required to develop competency and creativity through art, design and music are careful considered and mapped out in the planning of the three Learning Journeys across the year. For example, during our All About Me Learning Journey, we learn to mix paint to recreate our skin colour for our self-portraits and to represent our distinctive features. We also study a variety of famous self-portraits as inspiration including Van Gogh, Rembrandt and Frida Kahlo. We then develop these skills through the progression of different and more challenging materials, techniques and tools. For example, by Term 2 the children will be moulding and creating diva lamps for Diwali and painting repeating patterns with a fine paintbrush. By the summer term, they will be revisiting their self-portrait for their end of year report, this time reflecting an anatomically well-proportioned sketch of a face in the subtler medium of pencil crayon. Throughout continuous provision, we plan opportunities for and carefully monitor progress in the development of fine motor skills, working with tools, dexterity, colour mixing, joining and modelling skills to develop the confidence that children need in order to express themselves and to be proud of their creations.

Each week a range of songs and rhymes is included in the planning and we sing together as a class daily. Each year we participate in a wide variety of musical performances, such as our whole-school Easter and Harvest church celebrations and our Nativity play together with Key Stage 1 at Christmas. Our federation Music lead has devised a whole-school progression plan in music and the children are led by the Music lead in weekly sessions during Term 1 to develop their understanding of rhythm. Our P.E. unit: Dance helps the children to build on this awareness of rhythm and moving to music. Our twice-daily Activate sessions also help to embed this practice.

EYFS: IMPACT

Through our objective-led planning we are able to measure and track the impact of the teaching and learning in the EYFS at Etchingham CE Primary School/Riverside Federation. Our above average GLD and the steady progress that the children make throughout the year against their individual targets demonstrate the positive overall impact of our high aspirations for all of our children.

The impact of building and fostering positive working relationships with parents and carers can be observed through the high quality and frequent interactions with parents on Tapestry, helping to inform our judgements as practitioners. The wide variety of ‘pupil voice’ questions that we receive from pupils and parents at the start of each learning journey tells us that the children are engaged with the curriculum from the start.

Prime Area: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The impact of our work on emotional literacy and team-work is clearly evidenced in the harmonious and effective working relationship that the class is proud to display as we move around the school and to all visitors to our Reception environment. The children are able to identify their emotions and to articulate and put into action some techniques to help support them while experiencing negative states.

Prime Area: Communication and Language

By the summer term children will be speaking in full sentences with confidence and support from other class members using descriptive language and newly acquired vocabulary. They will express their ideas and opinions regularly and in some cases present these in front of the class. The impact of the Speech and Language Link interventions is clear and measurable for those who are in danger of falling behind.

Prime Area: Physical Development

All children will have made progress against their individual physical development targets and the majority of children will have developed an effective pencil grip and stamina for writing.

Specific Area: Literacy

By the time they leave Reception, the majority of the children will have developed the ability to tell their own stories using basic narrative structure and will be confidently and independently reading Phase 3 reading books including a selection of tricky and non decodable words. Our regular Phonics assessments will have allowed us to capture the children at risk of falling behind and ensure that interventions are in place to help the children keep up with the pace of our quality first Phonics teaching. The majority of children will be independently writing and composing their own full sentences, forming the letter shapes appropriately and including capital letters, finger spaces and full stops. They will also know off-by-heart a selection of poems and songs related to the learning throughout the Reception year.

Specific Area: Maths

The impact of our maths teaching is evidenced by the smooth transition into the Year 1 maths class. The children have a deep understanding of the composition of numbers within ten and are ready to start exploring Place Value.

Specific Area: Understanding the World

Children will be able to describe the seasons, the weather and some changing states in the natural world. They will be able to explain why some materials float and others sink and what plants and living things need in order to grow and thrive. They will be able to recall the stories behind some of the world's religious and cultural festivals and articulate some differences between our country and others and the people who live there.

Specific Area: Expressive Arts and Design

On completion of our Dance unit and our Reception ACTIVATE sessions, the children will have developed their ability to move in time to music and will have a greater appreciation of rhythm. The children will have developed specific skills based on their own individual needs when using tools and materials for creating models and works of art.