

The Early Years Foundation Stage

Every Child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and the child's experiences between birth and age 5 have a major impact on their future life chances. A safe, secure happy childhood is important in its own right. (2014 statutory Framework Document, introduction)

This is such a wonderful stage of learning and development, where children wonder, delight, problem solve, ask questions, and discover new things about themselves and the world around them. Through a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities 7 developmental areas are catered for, complying with statutory learning and development requirements. These areas are:

The three prime areas of learning:

- Physical development
- Personal Social and Emotional Development, and
- Communication and Language (Speaking and Listening)

The 4 specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive arts and Design

Each area of learning is divided into aspects. Our planning must ensure that we are catering for development in all these areas across the Early Years Foundation Stage - that is through Nursery and Reception.

Through all our planning, the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' are taking place. These three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

At the end of the Foundation Stage, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed. Each child is assessed against 17 Early Learning Goals with practitioners assessing whether the child is meeting, exceeding or not yet reaching (emerging) the expected level of development set out specifically in each statement. **This is the Early Years Profile.** These assessments are made by looking at all the evidence gathered, both adult-led and child-initiated, along with teacher knowledge of the child, any other records shared and discussions with parents and other adults involved.

From the Nursery, Children are introduced to the Phonics scheme we use at The Blue School, letters and sounds.

All the children in the Early Years classes have access to the resources across the school, including the new dedicated Early Years and Key Stage One playground and the new multi-purpose play surface.

Reception Children have both PE and music classes weekly.