



***Early Years
Foundation Stage
Policy
Including Teaching
& Learning***

Our vision

To see our children leave us as healthy, happy, well-rounded individuals who:

- have respect for the world and understand their responsibilities as a global citizen in ensuring that it is conserved for future generations
- are aware of their place in society and their responsibility to contribute positively to it
- are polite, helpful and have respect and tolerance for others and their beliefs and cultures and possess the skills and knowledge that they will require to enable them to continue their learning and reach their full potential

Our vision is to instil these values along with supporting your child in making as much academic progress as possible



Update photos



This policy should be read in conjunction with the four updated documents below



Early years foundation stage statutory framework

For group and school-based providers

Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five

Published: 8 December 2023
Effective: 4 January 2024



Development Matters

Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage

First published September 2020
Revised September 2023



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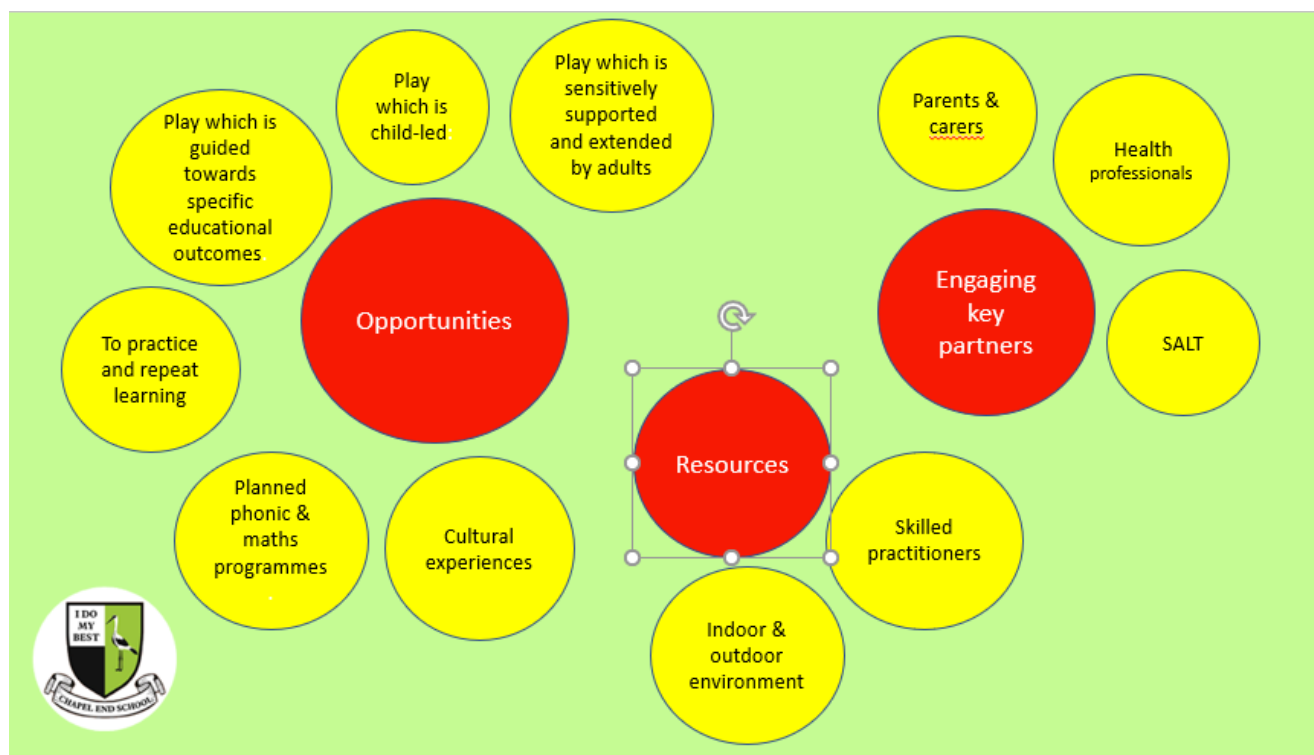
Progress check at age two

Non-statutory guidance for the early years foundation stage



Our curriculum is based on the following

- the opportunities we can give our children
- the resources we have available to support us
- the key partners we have to engage with us and offer support



We use the EYFS framework and the programmes detailed in Development Matters (the non-statutory curriculum guidance) to plan our curriculum.

We consider what we want children to learn while they are with us, the activities we want to be available to them and how our setting can support their learning. We aim to stimulate children's interests, respond to each child's emerging needs and guide their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning.

We implement these activities and experiences, so the children can progress in all the areas of learning.

We evaluate how well the curriculum works, checking what children know and can do as they move through the EYFS.

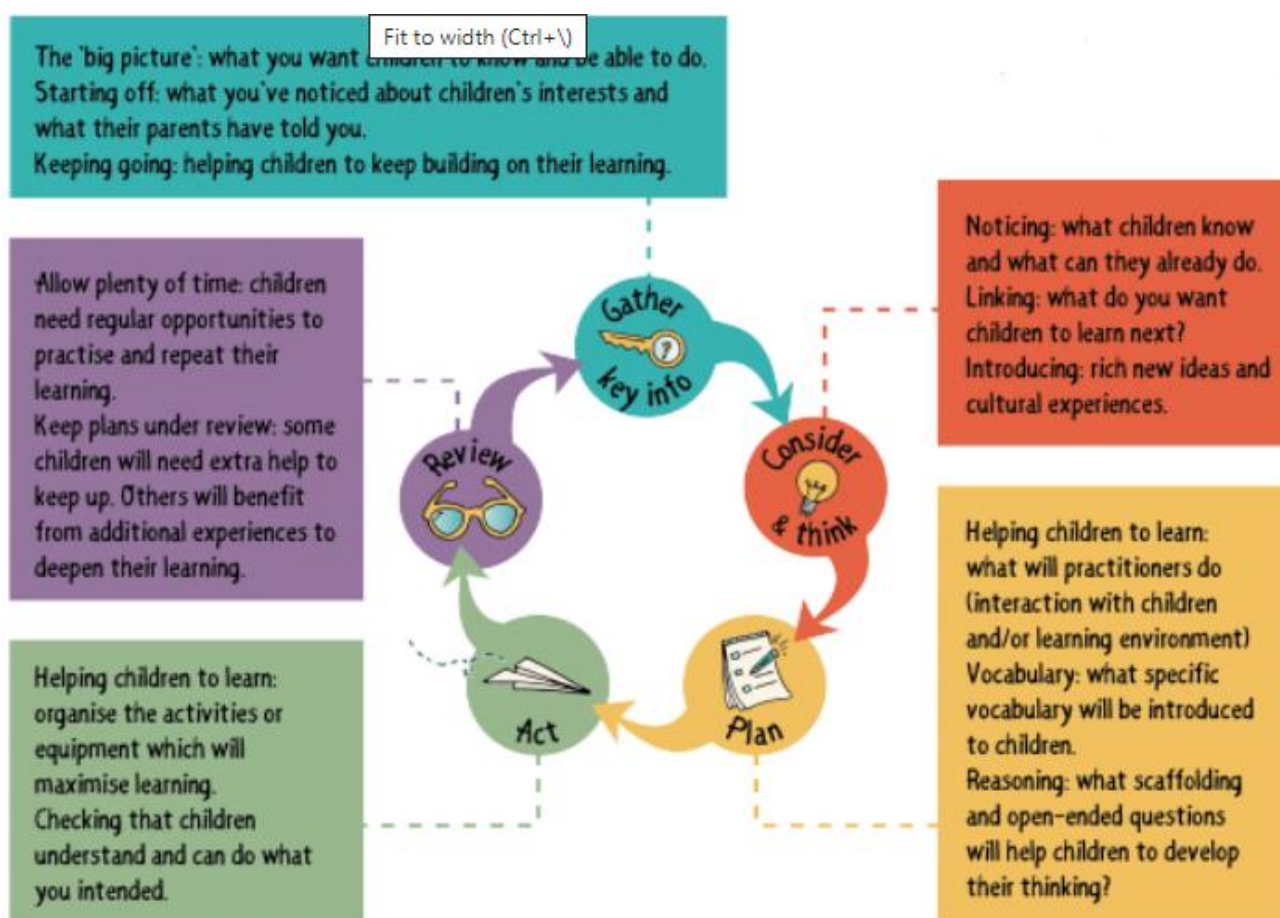
Our curriculum is unique to our setting. We watch our children and study how they lead their own play. We talk to parents and carers about the children's interests and carefully listen to what children say to gain information about their curiosities and interests. We have designed our curriculum around 6 broad topics (one per half term). These are flexible and designed to complement and reflect the interests of the children based on our experiences in previous years and with previous cohorts (See Chapel End Curriculum for our Two's provision, Nursery and Reception).

We use this knowledge to decide how best to engage children in the curriculum, choosing the right activity or environment.

Our curriculum meets the needs of the majority of children. Some children, such as those with SEND, will also benefit from additional support. Support for these children is highly individual and suited to their needs.

We use the early learning goals as an assessment during the summer term of the children's reception year.

Our observation, planning and assessment cycle



We observe the children to find out what they already know and what they can do. We note their interests and ask parents and carers to tell us about the things their child is interested in outside of school.

We use this information to plan engaging activities through topics and themes the children are interested in. Initially staff 'brainstorm' together, using the information gathered and identify the following:

- 'Character muscles' – e.g. curiosity, risk taking, enthusiasm, attention, inclusiveness etc
- Possible ideas/lines of enquiry
- Experiences
- Key stories/books
- Key vocabulary



Staff then create plans weekly based on the above. Our enhanced plan details the skills, activities and challenges the children will access when in the Continuous Provision areas. We also produce a timetable detailing the phonic and maths activities to be delivered during the week for our Nursery and Reception classes. We utilise programmes including Essential Letters and Sounds and White Rose Maths to systematically teach early phonics and maths concepts to the children.

With regards to assessment, we believe that assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not necessarily about collecting lots of data and evidence. Effective assessment requires practitioners to understand child development and this is always an area of focus for CPD for staff. Throughout the week staff observe the children within the setting and use Class Dojo and labels to make note of any 'wow' moments they see. Photographs are uploaded onto Dojo for parents to access and respond to, physical pieces of work and observations are placed into the child's Learning Journey file. Our assessment process ensures that staff are not taken away from children for long periods of time.

Learning Journey files are taken home once every term so that the children can share the wonderful work they have been doing with their families. Parents and carers are encouraged to comment on their child's file.

At key points during the year (end of September and then the end of the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms) the EYFS team meet together alongside the Head teacher to discuss the progress of individual children. Evidence from Class Dojo, Learning Journeys and Practitioner knowledge is discussed and a decision is made as to whether the child is 'on track' or 'not on track' for that point in the year.

We also complete a progress check with our two-year-olds. The progress check aims to

- review the child's development
- celebrate areas where the child is making good progress
- identify any areas of concern or where progress is not as expected, so that parents, practitioners and other professionals such as speech and language therapists, physiotherapists or dieticians can put appropriate support in place
- help parents to understand their child's needs and enhance their child's development at home
- invite parents to share their unique knowledge about their child, family and culture

Children in Reception complete the National Reception Baseline during their first few weeks in school. Staff also observe all children in September to give an on entry starting point.

Children identified as needing additional input will then receive interventions dependent on their need.

We recognise that play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems.

Children are considered competent learners by leading their own play, and by taking part in some play which is guided by adults.

As children grow older and move into the reception year, there will be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for year 1.

An enabling indoor environment

Our environment supports children to be fully engaged in purposeful play of their own choice and interest. As with the outdoor area, the indoor area allows for learning in all areas of development, but the two areas do not mirror each other. This is the ideal place for children to be calm and quiet (and we apply this requirement firmly and consistently), pursuing activities which require equipment resources that will not survive the outdoor elements.

In the EYFS department, the children choose where to go and what to do – they initiate their own learning and adults join them and support them in their pursuits. In order to support genuine choice we have a workshop style environment setup in our rooms. In all areas, the resources are available and accessible to the children at all times. The areas are clear, stocked and tidy at the start of the day:-- the tables and carpet areas are free of equipment but the resources are available next to these areas. For example, the unit below contains a box of playdough and resources to be used with the playdough. It is placed near a table and the children can choose whether or not to go to this area and what to do if they do go there.



This allows the children to be in control of their learning. They are able to select the area in which to play, the resources to use in that area and what to do with them. Obviously, their choices are limited by the areas and resources available and it is therefore crucial to have appropriate areas with age appropriate, varied, high quality, open-ended resources. It is also vital that the areas are well stocked, tidy, clearly labelled and arranged to allow optimum access. We constantly review and reflect on the environment to see which areas are proving productive and which need altering. For example, although we have opportunities for mixing sand and water outside, we want the indoor sand tray to be dry to offer different opportunities. Therefore, it is necessary to keep the water tray and equipment away from the sand tray. We also try to avoid making new playdough every day – so this also needs to be placed away from the water and sand.



Clear labelling helps children to be independent when tidying up. We also use shelving like this indoors for blocks (seen below), sand resources, individual items (timers, abacus etc) and creative equipment.



The resources (as well as the areas) are assessed and reviewed constantly with changes made as necessary.

We combine the creative area and the 'writing' area. Young children combine their different types of mark--making: they make a card and write a message; they draw a picture and write a story; they create a robot and add labelled controls. In many cases, they need creative equipment and writing

implements – we therefore store them all in one area, as well as providing mark--making equipment in all areas.



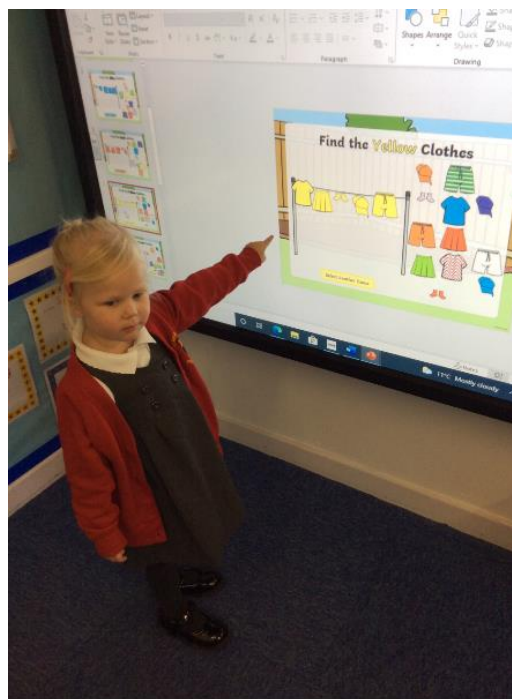
Children experience maths in almost all areas of the indoor rooms and we ensure that there is equipment in all areas to facilitate this. Because the children select and access resources themselves, they know where they are from and they know where to put them back when they have finished using them or at the end of the session.



We review our provision in terms of levels of involvement. If an area or a resource is not engaging children in purposeful play, then we remove it or change it for an activity that we believe will lead to higher levels of learning. Areas that deliver the highest levels of involvement are the role play areas, creative area, small blocks, sand, water, playdough and small world equipment (including cars and dinosaurs). We have 'deconstructed' our role play area to allow children to fully engage in the experience without limitations being placed on their imaginations. It creates a language rich learning space where children can interact with one another; sharing ideas and developing their own play scenarios.



We have iPads, digital cameras, CD players and interactive white boards readily available to support and record learning.



We ensure that our book areas are as inviting as possible. We have cushions, puppets and props to make the experience engaging. We also have books in numerous areas of the indoor classroom—craft books in the creative area, cookery books in the role play, construction and reference books in the small world area.



The most valuable resource in any setting is the group of adults. The adults are there to teach, they do this though observing and interacting. We ensure that our adults receive training so that they can spot a 'teachable moment' while the children are engaged, they know the children very well and have a sound understanding of child development. This ensures that the adults enhance and extend the learning at the appropriate level for each unique child. Generally, the adults go to the children. The children become involved in activities of their choice. The adults observe the children carefully, join them (if or when appropriate) and engage in quality interactions (teaching) to move the learning on, they "teach" through modelling, suggesting, providing vocabulary or resources, explaining or encouraging. In this way, if a child encounters a challenge, then they will not give up. Rather they will be supported to persevere, overcome the challenge and move forward in their learning.

In summary, any area or resource can be evaluated by assessing the levels of involvement that the children display. Children display the highest levels of involvement when they are pursuing their own interests in an environment that allows them to take risks and challenge themselves in their endeavours. The physical environment needs to be well laid out and equipped with high quality, open-ended, varied resources. The adults are key in creating the emotional environment that supports them in this – ensuring that they feel confident and independent, ready to try new things in the knowledge that the adults will help them if necessary, without taking over.

An enabling outdoor environment

Our outdoor areas are designed to support all areas of the children's development. We plan learning opportunities which encourage the children to:

- explore, discover and investigate,
- enjoy large scale movement
- develop confidence
- explore and experience all weathers and seasons
- collect and use natural resources for a specific purpose
- develop an understanding of our natural environment and how it changes

Outdoor learning is an integral part of the play and learning provision for EYFS. Children are encouraged to access the outdoor environment daily during continuous provision and the sessions are organised to maximise the amount of "free-flow" time available for our Nursery and Reception classes – our two-year-olds access their outdoor area as a group at key points throughout the day. Our planning recognises that the outdoor classroom is an extension of the indoor area but also an area to provide different opportunities on a larger scale, particularly the development of gross motor skills and communication and language. Our outdoor learning environment is set up daily as a stimulating and inviting space, which supports development across all areas of learning both Prime and Specific. Areas included are sand, water, digging, mud kitchen music, mark making, art, small physical, large physical, den building, climbing and balancing. Resources outdoors are organised so that the children can access them themselves and are able to tidy away with independence at the end of the session, and again, the crucial induction period ensures that the children know how to use equipment and are encouraged to think about the risks themselves.

The weather and seasonal changes outdoors offer learning opportunities different to indoors. Children and staff are required to provide suitable clothing and footwear so that the outdoors can be accessed in all weathers.

