

Foundation Department Curriculum 'Developing my skills to help me learn'

Intent

Our intent in the Foundation Department is “**Developing my skills to help me learn**”, working to support our whole school curriculum vision '**Developing, practising and using skills to help me learn and achieve**'. We believe encouraging a happy, creative and secure environment inspires our pupils to explore, engage and learn. The Foundation Department recognises that by facilitating a safe, caring, happy community, we can have a positive impact on learning, where every child matters, feels nurtured and we 'Remove Obstacles and Enable Access to Learning'. At the core of our beliefs is the importance of preparing our children for adulthood, supporting each pupils learning journey with personalised small step opportunities to become confident, independent and ready for the next stage of their education in the Middle Department.

Implementation

Implementing the Foundation Department Curriculum starts by ensuring all our pupils have an identified Communication Pathway, ensuring all our pupils have a mode of communication to access learning opportunities and experiences through our whole school Total Communication ethos. The Foundation department values the importance of the Early Years Foundation Stage approach, which is used to deliver an appropriate curriculum to our pupils in Purple Class. Its developmental approach and ethos is embedded throughout our Department. The prime areas of learning cannot be taught in isolation and overlap with each other; they are equally important and depend on each other. The specific areas also interlink and are taught alongside the prime areas also in an overlapping way. All children need opportunities to play, learn and explore. A variety of approaches are used and vary according to each child's learning needs and abilities; some will be supported by an adult, whereas others may be more child initiated and child led. There will come a time in the child's development, where a more structured approach and an introduction to more 'formal' teaching will take place, in order to prepare them for the next step of their learning.

Three PRIME areas of learning	Four SPECIFIC areas of learning
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Mathematics
Communication and Language	Understanding of the World
Physical Development	Literacy
	Expressive Arts and Design

All other classes' curriculum has been structured for pupils to access aspirational outcomes and progressive learning intentions from The Milestone School Core Subject Pathways. All pupils will have access to relevant experiences in our wider enriching subjects, with some pupils learning and embedding new skills from these wider curriculum enrichment subjects. Our personalised approaches enable our pupils to learn through engaging activities, relevant to their individual needs and abilities.

In the Foundation Department our Curriculum Plan details the breadth of subjects and experiences offered to the pupils. The Topic titles chosen for each term are broad and enable us to plan and deliver all subjects across the academic year. Our Curriculum Plan

revisits and builds upon skills over the rolling programme, ensuring that the pupils have robust opportunities to practice learning as well as make steps of progression. We prepare our children for their next stage of learning through carefully chosen Topics to deliver each subject that lay the foundations to learning, spark curiosity and encourage 'playing to play, playing to learn and learning to learn'. By following The Milestone School Enriching Subject Pathway, we know the skills and opportunities delivered in our Department will continue to be built on as the children move through the whole school. Our Department Curriculum enhances the lives of our pupils by giving the pupils personalised experiences that are appropriate to their age and stage of development, including access to Hydrotherapy, Soft Play, Rebound Therapy, RDA, Race Running and enrichment through local trips and visits. The pupils are at the heart of the Foundation Department Curriculum and we recognise that all children need opportunities to play, learn and explore. Outdoor learning (OPAL) is implemented throughout the Department and we believe that children's learning can be enhanced by maximising the potential of the outdoors. We value play and know children learn through play and this carefully planned time actively supports experiences and learning being embedded in the children's long term memory.

Impact

What difference is our curriculum making to the lives of our children?

We know that all the children are happy whilst in Foundation Department through their daily emotional check in's and regular attendance. We have termly events engaging our parents who share enthusiasm for the experiences and opportunities the pupils receive, joining us in celebrating achievements. Our children show pride in the outcomes they produce through our topics, with examples of these being displayed throughout the Department. The children leave the Department happy, healthy, and as independent as possible, having made individual progress to their full potential. The pupils move on having experienced a wide breath of subjects and/or experiences, having repeated opportunities to embed skills and knowledge into their long term memory. The pupils progress is measured by undertaking a baseline assessment upon entry to the school or class using our assessment system, SOLAR, and measuring this progress over set timescales, depending on which pathway pupils are accessing. Our SOLAR assessment is in line with The Milestone School Pathways. A wider range of assessment tools are used (Early Learning Goals, Engagement Model, formative assessment through marking, annotation and observations) to help evaluate the impact our curriculum has on each individual pupil. Effective and regular monitoring and feedback ensures our curriculum meets the diverse needs of the children in the Department. Professional development for all staff ensures they are skilled and knowledgeable and can effectively meet the demands and ever changing needs of our children within the curriculum experiences and enrichment offered.