

Purpose of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a play-based curriculum for children from birth to five years, which allows children to explore and learn in an environment that is secure and safe, yet challenging. Play opportunities are non-stereotypical and available to all children promoting the teaching and learning from a skilled workforce.

Within the EYFS Framework practitioners provide activities and make assessment judgements based on the seven areas of learning: 3 Prime Areas and 4 Specific Areas.

Prime

- *Communication and Language*
- *Physical Development*
- *Personal, Social and Emotional Development*

Specific

- *Literacy*
- *Mathematics*
- *Understanding the World*
- *Expressive Arts and Design*

Research into early child development shows that children learn more rapidly during their first three years than in later life; whilst all areas of learning are important and inter-connected, the three Prime areas that are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive. The specific areas will enable them to be self-motivated learners who are confident to succeed.

Communication and Language

- *Involves children being provided with the opportunity to experience a language rich environment; develop confidence in expressing their wants, needs and feelings and being able to speak and listen in a variety of contexts.*

Physical Development

- *Involves children being encouraged to be interactive and active in their learning and develop control, coordination and movement. They are supported in understanding the importance of physical activity and how to make informed healthy choices at meal times.*

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- *Involves supporting children in developing a strong, positive sense of themselves, and of others; form strong attachments and relationships and develop respect for others to develop their social skills and learn how to effectively manage their feelings. This area also supports the children in understanding appropriate behaviour and develops confidence in their own abilities.*

Literacy

- *Encourages children to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.*

Mathematics

- *Encourages opportunities to develop and improve counting skills, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shapes, space and measures.*

Understanding the World

- *Involves supporting children in making sense of the world around them and their community by providing opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.*

Expressive Arts and Design

- *Enables children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as encouraging the sharing of thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.*

When planning and guiding activities practitioners will reflect upon the different ways that children learn and ensure they utilise this within their practice. The Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

Playing and Exploring

- *Supports children's engagement and investigation and to experience things through being willing to 'have a go'*

Active Learning

- *Supports children's motivation to learn by helping develop their concentration, ability and will to keep trying when challenges occur and celebration of completing a task,*

Creating and Thinking Critically

- *Supports children's thinking skills through developing ideas, making links between differing ideas and create strategies for completing a task,*

The EYFS emphasises that parents are a child's primary educator and therefore encourages parents to contribute to their child's learning.