

Planning for and assessing children's learning

We follow the national Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum www.foundationyears.org.uk
We plan for each and every unique child, develop positive relationships with them and their families, engage them in stimulating environments which all contribute to every child's learning and development.

Planning

- We plan for children's learning across seven areas; three prime areas of Personal, Social & Emotional Development, Communication & Language and Physical Development which are fundamental to children's experiences. These support learning in the four specific areas of Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World and Expressive Arts & Design.
- Our Medium term plans (half-termly) include the areas of learning above along with any festivals and parent events for each half term. These can be seen on our website and on each classroom door. Our plans include 'core stories'; getting to know one favourite story really well to help develop language and literacy.
- Our short term plans (weekly) are based on individual children. We continue to use the seven areas of learning as above, building on each child's next steps in development. Children's next steps may be seen in A Child's Personal Pathway. We encourage parents to join us in sharing achievements and children's next steps together.
- We base our planning on what children are interested in so that they are motivated and curious to learn. Please do share your children's interests with us and we will incorporate them into our planning.
- Our short term plans include enrichment activities e.g. visits to the kitchen garden with planting, growing, cooking and tasting; music sessions led by a specialist, visits to our local park, special visitors such as animals from the City Farm. These are shared with parents as 'highlights of the week'.
- Our plans include indoor and outdoors play. Some children prefer to play and learn outdoors and we make sure children have as much opportunity to develop across all seven areas of learning outdoors as they do in our play rooms.

Observing

We observe children to inform our understanding of each child's development.

- Identify a child's current interests so we plan appropriate play and learning experiences.
- Encourage new skills that your child has shown and opportunities for further development.
- Enable children, parents and staff to share observations in their All About Me page in A Child's Personal Pathway.
- Involve parents in joining in with your child's acquisition of new skills.
- Provide information which can be shared with parents and (with parental permission) other agencies e.g. next school or setting.

We record our observations on the EYFS Tracker and welcome parent responses in your child's Learning Journal, home learning opportunity or by email.

Assessing

- While observing play we informally assess a child's development in order to identify opportunities for further learning.
- We ask parents how your child is getting on and what their current interests are, this helps us in conversations and planning with your child. You can do this by adding to your child's All About Me page in A Child's Personal Pathway or through email response to a comment sheet that we will send out termly.
- We carry out a progress check when your child is two years old if they are at Early Start. We ask parent's for information and share the progress check with you at the time.
- We share your child's progress with you informally throughout the year. In the Spring term there is a parent evening and at the end of the year there is a "My year at Early Start" summary which goes home in your child's A Child's Personal Pathway. If you wish to know more about your child's progress at Early Start at any time please do arrange an appointment.

Areas of learning and the learning goals towards which we are aiming:

Characteristics of learning - How we learn

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Playing and exploring - How we learn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We like to find out by exploring We are curious and use our senses We like to follow what we are interested in, use our imaginations and play pretend games We can take on a challenge when we feel safe 		Active learning - How we learn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can focus our attention, concentrate and persevere We can show high levels of energy and fascination We can persist through challenges with support We enjoy meeting challenges for their own sake We show great satisfaction in meeting our own goals 	
Personal Social & Emotional		Communication & Language	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-confidence and self-awareness Managing feelings and behaviour Making relationships We develop and learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to play in a group, extending and elaborating play ideas to respect and take care of each other to do things for ourselves how to behave in a range of situations to express our thoughts, ideas and feelings and ask appropriate questions of others to share and take turns 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and attention Understanding Speaking We develop and learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to express ourselves effectively a wider vocabulary and more descriptive language to listen to others and take turns to speak to listen attentively to stories, accurately anticipating key events and responding to what we hear to follow instructions and answer questions to communicate our own ideas and stories 	
Literacy		Mathematics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Writing We learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to listen and join in with stories, songs, rhymes and poems with increasing attention recall key phrases, events and characters from favourite stories to recognise familiar words that information can be conveyed through print to give meaning to marks as we draw write and paint link sounds to letters 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers Shape, space and measure We learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to use some number names accurately recognise numerals count objects count in order recognise, describe and create patterns show an interest in number problems begin to use mathematical names for shapes order by height, length, weight, capacity use every day language of time, money 	
Understanding the World		Expressive Arts and Design	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People and communities The world Technology We learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> about similarities and differences between ourselves and each other and among families, communities and traditions to talk about features of our immediate environment observe animals, plants, weather, changes and ask 'why' questions to use technology for a range of purposes 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media and materials Being imaginative We learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to sing songs, make music and dance and experiment with making changes to them to use materials, tools and try a variety of techniques in experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function to represent our own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role-play and stories 	