



Sand Hutton and Warthill Federated Church of England (VC) Primary Schools

Early Years Curriculum

Statement of Intent

Our Early Years Curriculum aims to lay a secure foundation for future learning. We engage children in learning from the very start and expect our children to leave us as happy, confident and skilful communicators who are curious about the world around them.

All staff work hard as a team to create a positive, caring and welcoming atmosphere where the children feel secure yet are challenged to achieve their best. The emphasis is very much on helping individual children to achieve their full potential. We are fully inclusive, and all children are expected to think about the needs of others. We respect all families and aim to develop a positive two-way relationship with each one.

We provide for and support every child. Within our Federation we know that children do their best when all their physical and emotional needs are being met. We embrace the individual and all staff understand that each child is different, and their learning requirements and styles are unique too.

By providing a high level of wellbeing this in turn leads to high levels of child development and the ability to create and think critically.

We aim to provide our children with knowledge, skills and experiences in a hands on, holistic way so that all learning is embedded in a meaningful context. We do this through a personalised, flexible curriculum that engages and motivates our children. It covers all the 7 areas of learning and supports the children's learning characteristics.

Implementation

Our curriculum is a carefully planned learning experience. During their Reception Year our children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage. Many of our children will have already begun their journey through the foundation stage. We find out about and recognise their previous learning and the experiences they've had at home and in nursery/preschool settings. Information is shared to ensure that new learning builds upon and strengthens their previous understanding.

We teach through mixed age classes. Nationally, over one million children are taught in mixed age classes and a third of the country's primary schools have mixed age classes at some stage. This style of teaching allows us a high adult:child ratio. Staff put effort, energy and enthusiasm into designing a personalised curriculum. We offer a flexible approach, provide additional challenge and create relevant teaching opportunities that deepens learning and understanding.

Our small class sizes allow us to provide a personalised learning experience. Pupils usually spend between two and four years with their teachers, resulting in strong relationships and tailored learning. Each class is viewed as a team of children not segregated by age or ability.

Our daily routines support children to settle in. Our ongoing assessment allows us to respond quickly to the children's learning by enhancing ideas and modelling vocabulary that is relevant to the children. Our environment is set up to develop appropriate skills. Our resources are considered carefully and are used to provide challenge, curiosity and to match the children's interests.

We provide a learning environment based on the individual children's needs and interests and it builds on previous skills and knowledge. It starts with the children and their own locality and stretches out to explore being a good citizen and develop their awareness of the wider world.

Staff observe, listen to and work with children to facilitate learning. Positive relationships and good communication play a vital part when planning for individual needs. Every child has the support they need to flourish.

All children access a broad, balanced, well-resourced curriculum, which offers opportunities for enjoyment and success through active learning. Planned activities aim to foster good social relationships, promote equal opportunities and support special educational needs. Children learn to co-operate and listen to others. They do this in pairs, small groups and whole class groups. We use short teacher inputs and access to a cross curricular indoor/outdoor provision. Staff plan for and ensure that both the inside and outside spaces are fun, safe, engaging and offer challenge.

Staff understand that the prime areas of learning begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences and run through and support learning in all other areas. Furthermore, these prime areas continue to be essential throughout the whole of the EYFS. All 7 areas of learning (see below) are used to plan children's learning and activities. Staff use first hand experiences, visitors and visits to enhance children's experiences and to bring their learning alive.

Prime Areas

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
- Communication and Language (CL)
- Physical Development (PD)

Specific Areas

- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding the World (UW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

In our Federation we encourage children to develop their imaginations, to get actively involved in learning and to make decisions. Through their play our children will:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world.
- Practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills
- Learn how to understand the need for rules
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems

To plan appropriate activities staff carry out assessments. Our assessments start with careful observation. These observations inform planning and in turn are used to support the children's wellbeing, development and learning.

We record observations in a secure online journal called Tapestry. This is shared with parents and family members can add their own observations too. This document is used to support statutory assessment judgements at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Impact

Children's progress is monitored closely from the moment they start, and their journey is tracked throughout the year allowing appropriate support and challenge to be put in place. Due to this our GLD continues to rise and in individual cases where children do not reach the required standard their transition into Year 1 is monitored closely to ensure they receive the support to help them progress.

Our assessments are integral to effective learning and teaching. The results of this are children who have a sense of belonging, have a positive disposition to learning and are ready to move through the school. They transition into Key Stage One with confidence and a strong character to meet the challenges of an ever changing world.

Our teaching style allows the children to display high levels of concentration, creativity, energy and persistence. Self esteem blossoms and children develop crucial social skills as they support each other in their learning journey. Our children talk confidently about their learning and share their experiences in sharing assemblies and in discussion with others.

Through our curriculum our children learn about risks and safety, how to make good choices and gain an understanding of boundaries. They develop into independent, confident and successful learners.

To conclude, our curriculum provides the building blocks for every area of learning and our children flourish and go on to be the best they can be.