



EYFS at Sunnybrow Primary School

EYFS vision statement

Our school is situated in a small rural village in County Durham, which is also an area of high social deprivation. A significant proportion of our pupils are eligible for Free School Meals and we have a higher than average percentage of pupils with Special Educational Needs. Sunnybrow is a very insular community, with many families never really leaving the immediate area. The population of the area is predominantly White British with a Christian background. Year-on-year, our pupils join our Nursery or Reception years either below or significantly below age-related expectation, with common areas of delay in Communication and Language, Physical Development, Literacy and aspects of Understanding the World.

At Sunnybrow Primary School, we believe that a child's early education lasts a life time; it lays the foundations for the rest of a child's schooling and it is our belief that all children are entitled to an ambitious and inclusive curriculum that educates all our children in knowledge, skills and understanding, to be effective, inquisitive, curious and independent learners and that helps them to overcome any disadvantage. We strive to enhance our pupil's **cultural capital** and support them in experiencing the awe and wonder of Sunnybrow and the world beyond to ensure that by the time they leave their Reception year, children have developed a love for learning and a culture of high expectation. We believe that emotionally healthy children achieve higher, so we want a curriculum that is carefully planned to provide the building blocks that pupils need to be self-confident, regulate their emotions and begin to tackle issues that might compromise their own wellbeing.

We want to achieve this by sharing engaging and worthwhile experiences with our children, linked to their interests and what they already know, thus building a fascination and curiosity for the world around them. Accurate assessment of a child's abilities will lie at the heart of all our decision making and our curriculum will be broad, balanced and relevant to our children, meeting their individual needs and the context that they live in. The core of our approach and practice will be rooted in instilling the early core concepts of the four **Fundamental British Values of Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty and Mutual Respect and Tolerance of others.**

Talk should permeate everything we do. We want to provide purposeful contexts in which our pupils can interact with others and practise their speaking and listening skills and develop a rich and varied vocabulary. We strive to identify speech, language and communications needs early and plan for purposeful intervention to ensure that these needs do not continue to affect a child's progress and development as they continue their journey through school.

Through 'Understanding the World', we want to provide experiences that help to broaden our children's horizons and develop a child's understanding of their place in the world. By meeting new people and exploring different cultures, we want to instil the virtues of acceptance and respect of difference from an early age. We aim to lay the foundations for inspiring little Historians, Geographers and Scientists, by providing an enquiry-based curriculum, which leads the children to 'find out' instead of adults explaining the answer and lays the groundwork for transferable skills such as asking questions, researching, observation, measurement, recording and presenting.

We recognise the importance of being able to read confidently and believe good quality early reading and literary experiences are crucial in supporting children on their reading journey as well as developing listening and communication skills, widening vocabulary, making links between the spoken and written word and introducing children to life beyond their immediate locality. We want to provide a curriculum that is rich in purposeful reading and story-telling opportunities, and that ensures that children make rapid progress with their reading skills.

As previously mentioned, our baseline data shows that our pupils come into our provision with underdeveloped gross and fine motor skills. We want to provide opportunities across our day and interwoven into our curriculum to support our pupils in strengthening their muscles, developing their proprioception and vestibular senses.

We want our children to feel at home in our provision and use 'playful' everyday experiences as further opportunities for learning; 'checking-in' is an opportunity for recognising names, our 'daily dashboard' for learning days of the week and exploring weather, hygiene routines teach good hand-washing habits, snack and lunch time is a non-threatening way to teach manners and social etiquette as well as opportunities for exploring aspects of maths, science etc.

We believe that a good quality Maths curriculum also forms part of those early foundations for learning, providing opportunities for pupils to problem-solve, investigate, be creative and present their findings. We want our pupils to be engaged, motivated and thinking critically for themselves, so we want to teach Maths through practical and sensory experiences, using authentic resources that have purpose and relevance to the child.

Intent

By the end of their time in EYFS, the key information and skills that we want children to have and apply is as follows:

Communication and Language:

- Speak to friends and adults and have conversations
- Listen to, enjoy and retell favourite stories
- Use a range of vocabulary to talk about interests, intentions and things around them

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- Be confident to talk about how they and others feel
- Understand their feelings and emotions
- Be independent and resilient learners

Physical Development:

- Be active, healthy and happy
- Be strong, coordinated and balanced
- Be precise, proficient and confident

Literacy:

- Develop a love for reading and listening to stories
- Decode and recognise printed words
- Communicate through print
- Articulate ideas

Mathematics:

- Know numbers to 10
- Count confidently
- Notice patterns and relationships
- Reason and explain

Understanding the world:

- Make sense of their community
- Experience the wider world around them
- Develop a rich and wide vocabulary
- Have a secure understanding of simple scientific processes
- Observe, analyse, justify and explain why and how

Expressive Arts and Design:

- Imagine and create
- Explore and play
- Communicate through what they see and hear

Implementation

We carefully plan to ensure that we provide learning opportunities and experiences clearly linked to the Prime and Specific areas of learning. Our pre-defined topics are based on recurrent historical data of common delays in specific areas and we feel they provide the necessary basic skills that our children need to prepare them successfully for Key Stage 1. However, we always begin every year and every half-term by looking at the individual needs of our pupils and their different starting points and use this information to adapt and amend plans according to the growing and changing needs and interests of all of our children.

During the week, we use observational evidence and ongoing formative assessment within every session to help us build up a clear picture of where a child is at in their learning journey and their next steps to move learning on. We identify children's interests and create experiences or enhancements that provoke interest and curiosity and develop and extend learning and thinking. We work hard to create an enabling environment which is ever evolving and creates independent learners amongst our children.

We recognise the many different ways that children learn and adults support them, and our days and weeks are flexibly planned with the knowledge of the Characteristics of Effective Learning in mind. Play and playful activities are at the heart of our approach and you will see a mixture of direct whole-class teaching, adult-led and child-led activities across the week. For some pupils who are not ready to engage in small group or whole-class teaching, we carry out objective-led planning, where we identify next steps and take these objectives into the children's play. Our children are immersed in lots of practical, first-hand learning experiences through which they are encouraged to explore, experiment and develop their language. The children use both the indoor and outdoor environment during teacher-led and child-initiated times. Additionally, throughout the year we organise several exciting activities, outings and visits/visitors to enhance the children's learning. Our main source of out-of-school learning is our local area and community.

We use a mixture of spotlight observations, floor books, writing books and on-line portfolios to celebrate children's achievements and, record observations, assess and track children's progress and identify their next steps. Regular parents meetings and the use of Class dojo ensure that parents are kept up-to-date with their children's development and progress and are fully aware of how they can continue to support their children's learning outside of school. Our online pupil portfolios offer

parents/family members the opportunity to send information about their child's news/achievements outside of school. We also actively seek to speak to parents informally at the end of the school day. All this helps us to build-up a well-rounded picture of our children.

Communication, Language and Literacy:

We have devised a long-term Literacy plan, by carefully selecting a range of high quality well-loved stories and traditional tales, that cover many of the 'seven story types' and allow our pupils to experience texts that are more challenging than they could read independently. These 'core' books are the types of books that can be re-visited again and again on different levels to support language development. The idea is that children will develop language and increase vocabulary in addition to gaining a love of books and will become very familiar with these known texts so that they can remember them and retell them.

We share a whole-class story at least once a day. At the end of the day, the children have the opportunity to 'vote' for our final story. We use these opportunities to explore and develop language, story structure and develop initial comprehension skills. Many of our children have difficulties with language comprehension, so we use 'Blank' Level questions to help us target appropriate questions at different children to elicit their understanding.

We also use good quality texts to inspire questions and enquiry when teaching other aspects of the curriculum. Each week, we identify subject-specific vocabulary that we want to explore with the children.

We select 10 'core' Nursery Rhymes each term that we want our children to be able to sing and teach these during rhyme time at least twice a week, but we sing whenever we get a spare chance! We teach a daily dedicated phonics session to Nursery and Reception, following Letters and Sounds and Time to Talk by ICAN.

Nursery phonics sessions are delivered in small groups and are matched to the children's current stage of development in Phase 1 phonics or Language Development. Where children are not ready for small group work, we take the objectives into the children's play. We call this objective-led planning. See Physical Development for implementation for mark-making.

In Reception, we teach a daily whole-class phonics session followed by 1:1 or small group activities for application for skills. We cover 3 sounds per week in phonics sessions. Progress in the Autumn Term in EYFS is sometimes very slow as many children still need to cover aspects of Phase 1 before they are ready to move on to phase 2. We also spend time working on spoken language skills as this is often an area of weakness that needs to be addressed before children are ready for formal phonics teaching.

Phonic teaching and assessment is rigorous. Letters and Sounds is broken down into what will be taught each term in each year group and attainment and progress is assessed against this. Children are grouped by phonic ability. There is a wide range of interesting and engaging phonic activities with opportunities to practice and apply new knowledge. Targeted Phonics intervention takes place for those who need it. Staff training for phonics is delivered in-house and includes all staff, including those working in KS2.

We teach the children how to form letters correctly as soon as we begin teaching letter sounds. Once we have taught all Phase2 and Phase 3 set 6 sounds, we begin learning to write our names. Writing words and captions forms part of sessions across the week. (See how we develop pencil control in Physical Development)

Our Reception children take home a phonically-matched home reading book. They are listened to reading 1:1 or in a small group with pupils of the same ability at least 3 times a week in school and it is expected that they also read this book 3 times a week at home too. We encourage pupils to

read a book at least three times to help build up sight recognition of key words and fluency. While children are learning the skills of blending, they also take home a 'word-box' which includes words with sounds they are familiar with.

Physical Development:

On entry, we assess all of our pupils to determine if they are meeting their developmental milestones. This enables us to quickly identify any pupils who may need extra support or intervention. For pupils who are not meeting their developmental milestones, they complete an Early Years Gross Motor programme, carried out twice a week for twenty minutes per session. We teach two hours of dedicated P.E. lessons per week to further develop our gross motor skills and carry out 'Dough Disco' and Squiggle While You Wiggle' sessions to strengthen hand muscles and develop pencil control and early mark-making.

We have three outdoor spaces that we use; our decking area, the whole-school playground and our forest school woodland. Our outdoor spaces are not extensions of our indoor classrooms but are designed to develop a different set of skills. All 3 spaces have resources that develop gross and fine motor skills. On our decking area, our mud kitchen, outdoor art and sand/water area provides opportunities for handling different equipment, filling, pouring, mixing and mark-making on a range of different scales. On our yard, we focus on raising the children's heart rates. We have lots of 'games' equipment and bikes, trikes and scooters for the sole purpose of getting lots of physical exercise. In our forest school sessions, the children use a range of real-life tools and climb, run and move on different surfaces. They use different gross and fine motor skills to complete different challenges.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

Fridays are dedicated to PSHE. We teach a discreet PSHE lesson following our schools PSHE curriculum and use some of the materials for sessions of Zones of Regulation. Our children 'check-in' at key points of the day to explore which 'zone' they are in. We look for ways of addressing PSED skills in 'playful' contexts throughout the school day (for example, developing social etiquette during snack times) and support children in applying the skills they have learnt in PSHE lessons in their play and interactions with others.

Mathematics:

In Nursery, we focus on early number and shape and space skills and plan sessions according to the needs of the pupils. For more-able pupils or those who are 'developmentally ready', we plan 2 or 3 dedicated maths sessions per week. Sometimes, these sessions are directly taught to a small group, using playful not formal strategies-the sessions are fun, engaging and relevant. For lower-ability pupils or those pupils who are 'not developmentally ready', we use an objective-led planning approach where we identify the next steps in children's learning but take the objective into the children's play. We try and explore these concepts at least twice over the course of a week. In all cases, we use the children's interests as stimuli.

In Reception, we follow the small-steps suggested planning from White Rose, but adapt the activities to suit the needs and interests of our pupils. We teach 4 dedicated Maths sessions a week, loosely following a two or three-part structure of warm-up, main whole-class or group input and then a further application activity if appropriate.

In both year groups, we use lots of concrete practical equipment and only move into more formal, written recording when understanding is secure and automatic.

Understanding the World/Expressive Art and Design:

As stated above, we teach pre-determined topics but also sensitively follow the children's interests and carefully develop them to build up a child's knowledge, skills and understanding. We identify enquiry-based key questions at a medium and short-term level, using the children's interests and questions to plan experiences to support the children in their enquiry. We don't explain an answer to the children but provide the right contexts and use questioning to elicit understanding and challenge misconceptions. We support children in exploring the processes of art and different techniques, so they can apply these discoveries to their own creations.

Impact:

In our provision, you will see happy, engaged and resilient pupils who are eager to learn and follow their own lines of enquiry. They actively seek challenge and enjoy working together on shared problems and experiences.

Learning portfolios, displays and writing books clearly demonstrate the progress our pupils make from their starting points.

Impact is measured through observation and other formative assessment methods. We carefully track pupil progress through the Foundation Stage Profile and data shows that year-on-year a large percentage of our pupils make at least good progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Reception year.

Judgements on the impact of the curriculum on pupils is based upon a triangulation of different monitoring and evaluation activities within school. Work and book scrutiny, pupil voice discussions, outcomes of assessments and quality of teaching and learning are all used as tools to help senior leaders assess the impact of the curriculum.