

EYFS Curriculum - Intent, Implementation and Impact

Intent - Why do we teach what we teach?

At West Cliff Primary School, our curriculum is designed to recognise all children's prior learning, valuing previous settings and home experiences. We work in partnership with parents to provide the best possible start for their children, ensuring that each individual reaches their full potential from their various starting points. Our aim is to provide them with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to prepare them for the challenges in Key Stage One and beyond. We want to build foundations based on academic success as well as moral and personal development, so that our children go onto be happy and active individuals and curious lifelong learners.

Our Curriculum has been designed with the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning at its core, Play and Exploration, Active Learning and Creative and Critical Thinking, leading into the building blocks of the whole school ethos of Resilience and Nurture. The impact of COVID has led our Prime Areas to be of greatest importance in EYFS, in particular Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language.

Many children arrive well below national expectations for their age at West Cliff Primary School and there are a high number of children from disadvantaged backgrounds with complex needs. We have to teach them how to listen, speak and meet the high expectations for behaviour by working together and being kind. Our enabling, warm environment and skilful adult interactions support our children as they begin to link their learning to their play and exploration. As the children move into Reception, we invest time and energy into helping pupils set and achieve their own goals by aiming high and developing a love of reading, writing and number. Our ever developing bespoke curriculum maximises opportunities for cross curricular links, links with the whole school and community, and links to their own interests by offering periods of extended play and shared thinking. Imagination and creativity are valued and we seek to create a sense of joy and fascination through our loose parts provision, continuous, indoor and outdoor provision, alongside trips, visits and regular beach school sessions.

Implementation - How do we teach what we teach?

Pupils learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult directed activities which develops from Nursery, through to Reception, changing with the various needs of the children and their own development. Children have rigorous directed teaching in phonics and maths every day and directed circle times focus on PSED. These sessions are followed with individual and group work, where the children work 'in the moment' with an adult to develop their individual targets. It is during this time that the teacher can systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide real, 'in the moment' feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new learning.

Children in both the Nursery and Reception are provided with long periods of time to engage in exploration throughout a variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in provision. The continuous provision indoors and outdoors are vital to our curriculum and planning for both these classroom areas are of equal importance. The curriculum is planned based on themes and intentions within our own experiences and the wider locality and community, it enables all aspects of children's development including Understanding the World and Expressive Art and Design. Loose Parts Provision and In the Moment Planning, enables core provision to be consistent, filled with high quality resources, and allows areas to be made and accessed with the children at the time. Each week planning and preparation for learning is led by the class teacher, where the whole group will look at the themes and interests of the children and the indoor and outdoor areas. Adaptations to these areas are discussed with key questions at the heart of reflection: What do our focus individuals need to develop, what are they curious about? What embedded learning have we observed in this area? What can be changed in a way to exploit the learning and interests of the children in this area?

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. West Cliff Primary School has engaged in 'The Little Wandle' phonics program which we follow rigorously so that most children meet good outcomes for reading and in turn the year 1 phonics screening. Children engage in poems and rhymes daily and high quality texts are used every day for children to enjoy different texts and be introduced to new and exciting vocabulary.

In maths, in Reception we follow the White Rose approach, with an emphasis on studying the key skills of number, calculation and shape so that children develop a deep understanding and acquisition of mathematical language. Children learn through games and tasks using concrete manipulatives which are then rehearsed and applied to their own learning within their own play. Nursery pupils begin to develop these key skills during their daily activities where they explore sorting, quantities, shape, number and counting awareness.

Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together, but there are a range of additional intervention and support to enhance and scaffold children who may not be reaching their potential or moving children who are doing very well. This includes, phonic booster sessions, mastery initiatives, PSED interventions, particularly social skills and access to our sensory equipment to help with self-regulation. The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning are viewed as an integral part of all areas of learning and these are reflected in our observations of children.

Regular monitoring of teaching and learning in EYFS at West Cliff Primary School includes coaching and feedback from SLT as part of the whole school monitoring. Specifically, EYFS is monitored through the SSTEW - Sustained Shared Thinking Emotional and Wellbeing - scale, which helps all Early Years Staff to develop their own practice through good subject knowledge within a supportive and cooperative structure. We tailor our staff development to Early Years and we focus on moderating outcomes across the phase so that every member of our team feels confident in making accurate judgements about individual next steps for learning.

Impact - How do we know what pupils have learnt and how well they have learnt it?

Our curriculum meets the needs of all our children so we spend a great deal of time looking at and evaluating how children are learning. This is achieved through talking to children, looking at their work, observing their learning experiences and by analysing data by class and individually. All staff in Nursery and Reception uses ongoing observational assessment to identify children's starting points and plan experiences which will ensure progress. The Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment is also completed within the first six weeks of the Reception year. At three points during the year, these observations and knowledge of the children are recorded and tracked on West Cliff Primary School Assessment Tracker, which is modelled on the OPAL system. This enables us to get a good starting point for each year group. It enables us to measure and track our starting points against national data set. It enables us each term to evaluate whether the next steps we had put in place and the impact of our teaching has been enough. In the final term of Reception the EYFSP is completed for each child and this is used to form the transition into Year 1. Evidence of children's learning including observations, work samples, photographs and contributions from parents are kept in paper 'learning journals' and through an on-line learning journey, Tapestry. Phonics assessments are also completed regularly, which quickly informs us of any children who are not making expected progress. Our aim is for children to 'keep up' not 'catch up.'

Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that children make good progress and successful transitions into year 1. Our children on average arrive with much lower starting points than national, but during their time in our EYFS children make rapid progress so that we meet the national expectation for GLD at the end of the Reception Year. Our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside our rigorous assessment and teaching ethos and our children leave our EYFS with the skills, knowledge and confidence to continue their learning journey.

