

### Aims

As a whole school we have developed Curriculum Drivers that underpin our Project Based Learning and curriculum. These are the underlying aims for not only Early Years, but will be seen throughout the school. These drivers include the opportunity to:

- Inspire children through an imaginative and immersive curriculum, ensuring that the children are happy and enthusiastic to learn, that we foster and nurture the children's imagination and curiosity
- Immerse the children in their learning by creating an immersive environment that reflects and promotes each classes project, and therefore, learning
- Become independent, self motivated and entrepreneurial learners, encouraging the children to adapt their work, think critically and take risks with their learning
- Be prepared for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Life by ensuring that each and every child is literate and numerate, as well as empathetic towards others, able to be resilient and ambitious to succeed in whatever they set out to achieve
- Be their Best in all they undertake, encouraging each and every child to try new things, work hard and push themselves to continue to achieve and to persevere in any activity that is before them
- Become curious about the world around them and practice the technique of Enquiry. Encouraging the children to develop problem solving skills, tackling any activity they set out to do
- Be aware of the wider Community, starting with their local community and providing opportunities to experience and learn about other communities and cultures further afield with the Project Based learning approach
- Be World Wise by fostering and nurturing the children's social and interpersonal skills, ensuring that they have the opportunity to work as a member of a team and can share their experiences and knowledge with their peers.

### Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available at <http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2012/03/Development-Matters-FINAL-PRINT-AMENDED.pdf>.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and included into the curriculum taught. There are three prime areas, which are seen to underpin all of the basics and support the other more specific areas of the curriculum.

The Prime areas are:

- **Communication and Language** – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
- **Physical Development** – Moving and Handling and Health and Self Care
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Making Relationships, Managing Feelings and Behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness

The Specific areas are:

- **Literacy** – Reading and Writing
- **Mathematics** – Numbers and Shape, Space and Measure
- **Understanding the World** – People and Communities, The World and Technology
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Exploring and Using Media and Materials and Being Imaginative

### Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These are regularly assessed through observations and planned for throughout the EYFS.

The three characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things and events around them and 'have a go'
- **Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different experiences and develop strategies for doing things

This links with the whole schools GLO characteristics, which show that we are determined, brave, inventive, kind, trustworthy and that we stick together. When children have shown these characteristics they are recognized with GLO stickers or a post card home. We also have a weekly GLO circle in which children nominate a peer for showing growth, love or going over and above. The child nominated will then receive a GLO band at the GLO MO show.

## Teaching Strategies

We ensure that there is a balance between adult led and child initiated activities across the day. We believe that even during child initiated activities the adults' role and interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children's understanding and so guides new learning. The role of the adult is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the children are doing, either through participation in the children's game or encouraging the children to participate or complete a task with the adult. The children are taught through a number of different strategies that are both Early Years based as well as direct teaching and other more investigative project based learning approaches.

- **Project Based Learning** – This is a whole school approach that provides a real purpose for learning, ensuring all the teaching and learning is real, purposeful, inspiring and immersive for each and every child.
- **Exploration Time** – Exploring is an important and integral part of the Early Years curriculum and classroom. We believe that children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. We use prior assessment of the children's skills and knowledge, as well as the project and immersion as the starting points for these experiences. The project and immersive feel of the environment inspires the children to learn and investigate the experiences and opportunities around them. We carefully plan the environment and opportunities within this environment to reflect on what has interested the children, making sure that we provide opportunities to extend and practice the skills they have learned during the project or through direct teaching. We ensure that each of the different areas of learning are represented in the environment and provide different experiences and opportunities to learn. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Achieving and maintaining the balance between child initiated and adult led activities is very important to us.
- **Direct teaching** – In FS1 we have opportunities throughout the sessions in which each child is encouraged to participate in an exciting activity led by the teacher or Early Years Practitioner (EYP).  
We concentrate on developing children's speaking and listening skills as this lays the foundations for the phonic work, which starts in reception. These activities focus on environmental and instrumental sounds whilst also focusing on rhyme and rhythm.  
In FS2, the children participate in daily RWI sessions. This focuses more on learning the letter sounds whilst focusing on blending and segmenting words. Children in FS2 also have a weekly mini maths mission, which provides a purpose for learning and applying the maths skills they have previously learnt. Children are given library books weekly to take home and share with their parents. When your child reaches red group in RWI they will be given a reading book to take home and practice. They may also have some words to take home to explore. We encourage lots of games such as snap, flashcards and bingo to help them with their blending and segmenting. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

## Project Based Learning and Exhibits

The school as a whole has embraced the Project Based Learning (PBL) approach to teaching and learning. Each project aims to give a real purpose and real experiences, with all teaching and learning building up to a final exhibition. Each project starts with the final exhibition in mind, which then generates an essential question. This is then broken down into different focuses, each of which provides different skills or opportunities that build into or towards the final exhibition. Each exhibition is different and tailored around the different projects that the children are immersed in. We extend an invitation to an audience, which might be parents, local businesses or even to the public. The children are very proud when sharing their work and celebrating their learning.

## Visits and Visitors

The part of visits and visitors plays a very important role in the Early Years at Yarborough Academy, as these are seen as an opportunity to further develop our children's view of their world or community. Each term the children are given the opportunity to widen their experience through either visits to specific areas (e.g. the seaside, local farms or wildlife parks). In addition to this we have visitors invited into the school who are seen as experts in their field. Each of these visits and visitors are carefully planned and tailored to the project the children are actively learning.

As well as carefully planning these experiences we ensure that all ratios are matched for the year group carefully. We ensure that there is a ratio of 1 adult to 5 children with the Reception class and 1 adult to 3 children with the children in Nursery when we are out on trips.

### **Classroom Organisation**

Our Early Years classrooms exploration time is an important role in our PBL work, created and organised in ways that totally immerse the children into the project. In addition, these rooms are organised with defined areas with clearly labeled resources to ensure that children can access these easily and confidently. All rooms in the Early Years are planned carefully, ensuring that the areas not only continue to immerse the children in the project and continue any learning as a result of PBL, but also give the children the opportunity to access all seven areas of learning. Classrooms have the opportunity for children to experience writing, mathematics (and Numicon), construction, small world, role play, creative and fine motor skills.

The outdoor area is as important as the indoor environment and is something we continue to develop, ensuring that we take out the project based learning as much as possible, creating the links between the indoor and outdoor environments.

### **Assessments, Observations and Learning Journeys**

Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. This involves practitioners observing children in a variety of opportunities to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. This happens live throughout any taught session as well as during free exploration times when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. These observations and assessments will then be used to shape and alter any future learning.

Observations are taken using the 2Simple to build a profile app, which allows us to observe, take photos and make notes while observing what the children are doing or saying. This allows us to build up a picture in a variety of opportunities and areas and comment on what we feel are the next steps for the children. We are then able to share these experiences with the children's parents sending each child's learning journey via email. This is sent in a 3-week cycle, with all observations being sent that were recorded during that 3-week period.

On entry to Nursery a baseline assessment is carried out for each child, using assessment from taught sessions and observations captured during on 2Simple. These assessments are collated and put into a tracking tool called OTrack, this allows use to collate all the data and assessments for each child measuring progress and highlighting children that are achieving more than expected or less than expected, which then allows us to tailor the project or curriculum accordingly for each individual child. These assessments are input into Otrack at the end of each term throughout FS1 and FS2. At the end of FS2 (Reception) each child is assessed against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG). They are assessed as either emerging, expected or exceeding the ELG for each of the areas of learning and a report is given to parents informing them about their child's learning and progress.

Each term the assessments made are collated and provision maps are created for each class, these provide a basis for the conversation during provision meetings with the Head Teacher and Assessment Lead teacher, looking at what is being put into place to support or extend any children within the class.

### **Role of Staff and Key Workers**

In FS1 your child will be assigned a key worker. A key worker is a named practitioner who has responsibility for a small group of children, they are there to help nurture your child and help them feel safe and secure. A key worker will respond to your child's needs and help them settle into the setting.

The role of each teacher is to ensure that each child's care and development is carefully catered and planned for through exploration time, project and other experiences. Each adult aims to develop a positive relationship with each child in the class, as we believe that a happy, nurtured and confident child is a child that is ready to learn. We actively seek positive relationships with the parents as well as the children.

### **Relationship with Parents and Carers**

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and so we aim to work very closely with parents.

In FS1 we encourage parents to add to their child's project files to strengthen the link between school and home. Children then proudly share their project files weekly with their key worker groups.

We have termly stay and play sessions, which have a main focus or theme. At the beginning of the school year we

hold Numicon and phonics stay and play sessions to ensure parents have the correct information they need to help children with their learning at home. We also link some of our stay and play sessions to special days throughout the year such as grandparents day and Christmas.

### **Transitions**

We have several transitions throughout the Foundation Stage that we manage with care. The first transition is that transition into Nursery, which is very often some children's first experience of any type of setting or school. For this transition 2 'little seedlings' sessions are planned in which parents and their children are invited to come into the nursery setting. We encourage parents and children to have fun and enjoy the fun and exciting activities the nursery has to offer. The 2<sup>nd</sup> session involves children joining in with a fun activity with the early years staff whilst parents speak to our learning mentor about any queries or questions they may have. These sessions provide an invaluable opportunity for the children and parents to meet the adults in the setting and become familiar with the environment. During these 'Little Seedlings' sessions we also arrange times for a home visit, in which the schools learning mentor and nursery teacher will visit the child and parent in their own home, talking more in depth about the school and providing an opportunity to complete the relevant forms that need to be completed for the schools records. This also provides a time to become familiar with the parent and child, developing positive relationships from the outset.

The second transition that occurs during Early Years is the transition from Nursery to Reception, this jump from part time schooling to full time can be very daunting for both parents and their children and we aim as a school to ensure that any transition is as smooth and comfortable as possible. In order to do this we invite the parents into a transition meeting during the summer term to provide the parents with information about the school, the curriculum and PBL. We also have the opportunity to talk about other general information subjects, such as school dinners, phonics, mathematics and an opportunity to meet their child's new class teacher. In addition to this we invite all children joining FS2 into school for 2 weeks at the end of the summer term. This is an excellent opportunity for children to begin their new project whilst also meeting their new friends, teachers and becoming familiar with the school. This is a whole school approach therefore children transitioning to year 1 will also get the same opportunity.

There are transition meetings planned during the summer term between nursery and the new class teacher in Reception, allowing the nursery teachers to provide further information about each child's development and pass on any other important information about each child (e.g. medical, SEN, EAL, etc.).

We also have an opportunity for Reception teachers and Year 1 teachers to meet and inform the child's new teacher about each child's level of development, ELG achievement and any other information about each child (e.g. medical, SEN, EAL, etc.).

### **Safeguarding**

Children learn best when they are happy, safe and feel secure. We aim to ensure that all children feel happy, safe and secure through the continuous development of positive relationships between children and staff as well as relationships with their peers. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance.

It is important to note that all staff are given a school registered iPad in which they use to take photos for our assessment app 2Simple to Build a Profile. All data taken for these assessments are stored in the cloud and do not remain in these devices. Any data stored within the 2Simple system is password protected and encrypted.

Our school has a rigorous safeguarding policy and procedures that are used to identify anyone at risk of harm or radicalisation, this sets out a clear procedure for reporting any concerns from minor to major. All staff are regularly trained in BASICs Safeguarding, which is updated in a regular basis. All staff are trained in Team Teach, which trains staff in ways to handle children that are at risk of harming themselves or others, and again this training is regularly updated and refreshed. The school has rigorous checks when employing members of staff, ensuring that they have the relevant qualifications and are DBS checked. All DBS checks are updated in a rolling basis as required.

We have an e-safety policy which stipulates and advises how to keep children safe when online, which is available on our schools website <https://www.yarboroughacademy.co.uk/about-our-academy/safeguarding1/online-safety/>. All staff are regularly made aware of how to keep safe online, and have training around this. This is also regularly promoted throughout the school. The school as a whole also has a filtering system that blocks any unknown or suspect websites.

## Health and Safety

Within the school we follow a set of guidelines regarding different aspects of Health and Safety.

- **Healthy school meals** – our children when they enter Reception are entitled to a free school meal and are provided with this. The school meals are carefully catered and follow a healthy food model.
- **Healthy snack** – Fruit and milk are provided and are available throughout Nursery and Reception for children to eat. We also encourage children to try new or more exotic types of food/fruit.
- **Accidents and First aid** – There is a trained Paediatric First aider on site at all times. All first aid cupboards are clearly labelled and regularly updated. All accidents are recorded and parents are informed of any accidents. If a more serious accident occurs (e.g. significant bump, scrape or graze) parents will have a phone call home to inform them of anything that has happened before the end of the session.
- **Nappies** – We encourage all parents to ensure their children are potty trained before they start nursery, but in the event that this is not possible, we will put into place a care plan which will ensure that the child is well looked after and regularly changed..
- **Fire alarms** – A fire alarm practice is organised at least once a term and all of these are timed and recorded. We have set fire doors throughout the setting and the caretaker carries out regular safety checks.

**Child Protection and Safeguarding** – We have a very clearly set out safeguarding policy, which is available on our website (<https://www.yarboroughacademy.co.uk/about-our-academy/safeguarding1/>), our Safeguarding officers are Mrs Hannah Albery (Head teacher) and Mrs Elizabeth Cox (Deputy Head Teacher).

Policy written: Spring 2020	
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