

# Early Years Curriculum Statement

## Intent

At Cummersdale School, we intend to provide an education that gives every child the best chance to become well-rounded, happy individuals ready to succeed in an ever changing world. We believe our curriculum is inclusive, educating all children to develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding in a way that allows them to become inquisitive, effective and independent learners. We aim to provide every child with the tools needed for future success; giving each child the best start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. We promote self belief in all children, teaching them to believe in themselves, their abilities and capabilities; and to develop positive attitudes to learning, enabling them to be persistent, motivated and successful when faced with challenges.

Our Early Years curriculum has been designed so that all children experience the seven areas of learning through whole class/group teaching and play based learning. This is also reflective and responsive to the needs and the interests of the children ensuring engaging themes and challenging continuous provision activities. The learning that takes place is carefully planned to support communication and language development' personal, social and emotional development; and physical development as well as literacy, mathematics, understanding of the world and expressive arts and design. We recognise that all children come into school with varied experiences and this knowledge and skills are built upon.

We work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage happy independent learners who thrive in and out of school, reaching their full potential as they start on their educational journey in Reception and beyond.

## Implementation

We ensure that all areas of learning are represented in the environment as well as ensuring the characteristics of learning (playing and exploring, active learning, creativity and thinking critically), are also embedded in the provision. Activities are planned that focus on the 3 prime areas; Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development. As well as the 4 specific areas of Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World and Expressive Art and Design.

**Communication and Language** - Priority is given to developing children's early communication and language skills in every learning opportunity. The learning environment is designed so children can play and work co-operatively as well as having quiet spaces for the more reluctant speakers. Key vocabulary is taught explicitly during whole class sessions with vocabulary visually displayed as well as their use being modelled by adults in appropriate contexts. Open-ended questions are used to promote thinking skills and language development.

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development** - Discreet PHSE lessons are taught which focus on forming positive relationships and respecting others; developing children's social skills and managing their feelings; behaving appropriately in groups and having confidence in their own abilities. These skills are consolidated through continuous provision and modelling of appropriate behaviours.

**Physical Development** - We aim for children to be as active as possible in school. There are discreet PE lessons that take place each week where skills are developed. Children practise their balance and co-ordination in gymnastics and early ball skills are introduced where children are shown how to control the ball. Dancing and moving to music showing co-ordination and rhythm. Children also have the opportunity to develop their skills riding trikes.

**Maths** - In the Early Years children develop their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers; calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; describing shapes, spaces and measures. We follow the Power Maths scheme within school which allows children to develop a deep understanding of numbers and the fundamental skills needed for skill progression further up the school. There are Maths opportunities presented throughout the learning environment, which children can access when they want to through continuous provision. Apps such as Numbots are also promoted and used both in school and at home. Progress is tracked on this interactive resource with awards being given each week.

**Literacy - Phonics** - Reading is prioritised in the Early Years. It is underpinned by a coherent and systematic phonics scheme which is taught daily. Read Write Inc is used enabling children to decode letter-sound correspondences quickly. As the children become more familiar with the sound system they begin to blend these sounds to form words. Children are then given the high frequency words to learn which is consolidated daily. Children are exposed to more words as their confidence increases. Common exception words are also taught and children are able to read these on sight. Alongside this reading books are provided which are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and common exception words to match their ability, changing on a weekly basis.

Key texts are used as a hook for various activities supporting the theme for the half term. The texts are acted out using the helicopter stories concept which then allows children the opportunity to create their own stories and act them out. Writing activities are planned which expose children to a variety of purposes for writing both fiction and non-fiction.

A cosy and relaxing reading den enables children to sit and enjoy a variety of books in a quiet space. The area helps to promote a love of reading and offers both fiction and nonfiction books to look at. Children are also able to use reading apps such as Epic on the I pads in this area, enabling those who have emerging reading skills to access texts that are read to them or which they can read along to.

**Expressive Arts and Design** - Children have access to a wide range of media and materials which they can use to be creative in the craft area, this is available both in and outdoors. Children have the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through activities in art, music and role play. With a designated music area children can learn to follow simple notation, using a variety of tuned and untuned instruments. Children are able to express

themselves in the role play area which is topic based giving the children the opportunity to respond to different situations whether this is looking at people who help us or going to the shops to get the weekly shop.

**Understanding the World** - We aim to guide children to make sense of the physical world around them and the community in which they live. This is through topic and discussion, they are able to observe and find out about people, places and the environment. We look at developing technology, all children have access to an I-Pad and are able to access this during continuous provision. Teacher led activities also make use of I-Pads, using apps such as Showbie, Purple Mash and Show Me to record work.

Children with additional needs are included in whole class lessons and teachers support as necessary. Activities are adapted where necessary to allow them to access the same work as their peers. We work alongside Early Years Sencos and other external agencies to ensure that all children are able to access the curriculum and are supported in an appropriate manner.

### **Impact**

On entry to school, there are a number of assessments that take place. Most importantly, all children are assessed using the Baseline Assessments. This gives a brief overview of the starting point of children and is used to inform planning. During the autumn term all children are assessed in RWI and are placed in groups with the KS1 children according to their ability. At the start of the spring term all children are assessed for the NELI (Nuffield Early Literacy Intervention). This highlights any children who are weak with their language and communication skills and allows us to put in intervention at the earliest opportunity.

Evidence Me is used throughout the year to record 'wow' moments and achievements and these are shared with parents. This record also shows the coverage of activities and progress being made by the children. Parents are also invited to send in photos of achievements made at home in order to create a more rounded picture of a child's ability as well as learning more about their interests which then informs future planning.

Throughout Reception ,children are assessed in relation to their progress towards Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals. These judgements are made on the basis of accumulative observations and in depth knowledge of the children acquired through ongoing assessment. Summative assessments are recorded at the end of each term using the ScholarPack. This tracks the progress made by children across the 17 Early Learning Goal areas. This is discussed at termly progress meetings, where any strengths and weaknesses are identified.

At the end of the year, children will have become successful learners and are fully prepared for the next stage of their education as they transition to Key Stage 1. Children will have at the end of Reception, developed essential skills required for everyday life and lifelong learning. They will be well rounded, happy, inquisitive and successful learners. Parents receive a report detailing progress towards reaching the Early Learning Goals (ELG) and the Good Level of Development (GLD).