



Watlington Community Primary School

Rationale for EYFS/Phonics

Curriculum Intent

We aim to provide our pupils with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to thrive in their first year of schooling. We aspire to provide an outstanding education that supports our youngest children in becoming confident, independent and resilient lifelong learners. It is our intention that our children will be provided with an inclusive and stimulating curriculum based on the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. We will ensure that the curriculum we provide is broad and balanced in order to provide the children with skills, knowledge and experiences that go beyond their everyday occurrences. We aim to ensure that our youngest children are provided with the tools required to achieve and make progress from their starting points.

On entry into school, all pupils will receive direct instruction of systematic, synthetic phonics and this will continue into Key Stage 1. This will enable our pupils to decode words by looking at graphemes and saying the corresponding phonemes, blend the phonemes in order to say the whole word, encode words by identifying the phonemes in their spoken words and finally write the graphemes that represent the phonemes. The school has adopted the validated twinkl phonics scheme, which means that phonics is being taught consistently and with fidelity across the school. We aim to teach phonics for around 50 minutes a day and equal measure is given to reading and writing within this. Reading is encouraged and promoted daily through the use of phonics, guided reading, shared reading and buddy reading. Phonics is assessed half termly in order to ensure that the children are making progress in line with their starting points. Children are grouped early in phonics in order to ensure that they are receiving phonics teaching that is tailored to their individual needs as we recognise that all children are unique.

The EYFS long-term plan ensures that the children have a well-planned, mapped out curriculum, which also provides teaching staff with a document that demonstrates skill progression but is child centred and can be adapted based on the individual needs and interests of the children. We aim to broaden our children's experiences by providing them with opportunities to try new things and encouraging them to take on challenges that will move their learning forward. We aspire to provide our children in reception with an environment that provides exciting opportunities to learn and explore, promotes challenge, curiosity and a real love of learning. We believe that the correct mix of adult-directed and child-initiated play ensures the best outcomes for our children. We recognise the crucial role that Early Year's education has to play in providing firm foundations upon which the rest of a child's education is successfully based.



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We recognise that developing children's communication skills including but not limited to the spoken language, vocabulary development and listening skills are extremely important. We aim to provide a language rich environment to ensure that the children are exposed to and are using more ambitious vocabulary depending on their starting points.

Implementation and Pedagogy

The EYFS curriculum is comprehensive, broad and balanced. We support our youngest children in developing an inquiring mind, the ability to ask and answer questions and to apply any knowledge and skills they have acquired to new tasks. We comment, enhance and extend on what children say by providing them with new knowledge. For example C: 'I went to the car boot sale', T: 'Yes there was a car boot sale in Downham Market on Saturday but I didn't go this time'. We have built and continue to build our school environment to enable our children to strengthen their core muscles through physical play, both inside and outside.

They develop through wonderful, exploratory, sensory experiences in our mud kitchen, sand tray, water tray and taking part in outdoors sessions in our outside classroom. Through the use of Mastering Number, challenges, exploration of the learning environment and direct teaching of the mastery approach, we encourage and aim for our youngest children to develop mathematical skills that can be applied in a range of situations throughout the rest of their schooling and wider life.

Our learning environment is adaptable in order to reflect children's interests and progression. The children are supported to learn to work together, manage their feelings and ask questions through skilled adult facilitated play. Well-being and life skills is a crucial part of our Early Years curriculum and children are taught strategies that they can utilise to manage their feelings, should they require this such as breathing techniques.

The curriculum is taught through topics which are enriched with classroom enhancements, trips and visitors. Topics are supported by quality key texts and are chosen purposefully in order to ensure that themes covered are relatable to the children in some way. Topics also enable children to compare their life experiences with the experiences of other people and other cultures. They are also chosen carefully to encourage children's speech, language and communication development. All planning, however, is flexible and responsive to children's needs so plans can be changed and adapted dependent on children's interests.



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At Watlington Community Primary School, we ensure that we meet the welfare requirements outlined in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that they feel safe and secure and that their individual needs are being met. We want our children to feel welcomed into our setting. We provide play items that are familiar to the children and that they would find in their own homes such as the home corner. We will also ensure that the staff that works in Early Years have been paediatric first aid trained.

There are a number of different techniques and strategies that we adopt in order to support our children with their communication and language skills. Children are provided with the opportunity to listen to stories, poems and rhymes, which support the children in developing their imagination, enhancing their vocabulary and their comprehension skills. We ensure that language development is a priority. We ensure that we provide more unusual objects in the environment such as 'long handled ladle' so that the children are exposed to and are using this new vocabulary. The children are taught directly how to comprehend what they have read or listened to.

We support the children in developing their personal, social and emotional skills such as resilience and perseverance by encouraging them to 'have a go' first and to problem solve with some support from the adults in the room if required. We encourage our youngest children to listen to one another and take turns. Children are provided with strategies that support their speaking and listening such as facing the person that is talking and playing games that encourage turn taking.

In our half termly phonics assessments (EYFS, Key Stage 1), we are able to identify children that are not making the expected progress in phonics and provide small group or one-to-one interventions. This will provide these children with the extra experiences that will support them in their reading. In line with our phonics scheme, we ensure that our children are being provided with fully decodable books that match their current phonics levels. Children are given sufficient time to build up fluency with the books that they are reading.

We will be aiming to ensure that our phonics is taught with fidelity in order to ensure that phonics lessons are taught confidently and that there is a clear progression from reception to year two, making sure that each session is pacy. Children will receive a systematic synthetic phonics approach until they can read fluently. The phonics lead will be monitoring phonics sessions across the three year groups in order to ensure that there is consistency in all staffs approach and that Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) is taught first, fast and with fidelity. Any training needs will be addressed quickly.



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The implementation of the curriculum is influenced by the recommendations from the Ofsted Literacy Research review, Bold Beginnings, Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the article by the Education Endowment Foundation 'Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1'.

The curriculum works on a spiral principle, whereby pupils revisit concepts, with increasing levels of complexity and do not move on until skills and knowledge are secure. Although we recognise it is not a 'one size fits all approach', we understand child development and use documents such as Development Matters and Birth to 5 to ensure that children's learning is progressive. We support our children with their next steps, ensuring that we are not missing out any vital steps.

We understand the importance of parental engagement and believe that our parents have a crucial role to play in their children's education. We work hard to create strong partnerships between home and school. School staff and parents are able to communicate instantly through Class Dojo. Parents can share their child's home experiences through the class portfolio and school staff can share learning and news through the class story. Parents are invited to a stay and play event each term with their children. This is always well attended and a positive experience for the children. Children's learning is also shared through the use of a learning journey that the parents can see when they attend parent's evenings. They would also be made available on request.

Opportunities for cross curriculum links

The class teacher is able to see links between EYFS, Science, geography, history, RE, art and music and is able to make these links explicit to the children. This enables the pupils to build connections between different subjects and connect schema in their long-term memory, adding new knowledge to existing knowledge and experiences.

Impact

This successful approach at Watlington CP School will result in children that are engaged, inquisitive and not afraid to take risks or try new things. Children will learn to be more independent and develop some resilience when things do not go right the first time round.

We regularly review the impact of the provision by:

- Observing how engaged the children are within the setting.
- Intervening when the play needs to be further developed.
- Assessing phonics half-termly.
- Talking with the children and assessing their communication skills.



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- Monitoring of pupils' responses in retrieval practice.

At the end of the Year, the children in reception will be assessed the 17 areas of learning and whether they have reached a good level of development (GLD). This performance measure will be tracked in school.

The EYFS Lead regularly participates in monitoring with the EYFS governor to ensure that their role is being carried out effectively, to discuss what is going well and to set targets that will help improve the delivery of the EYFS curriculum.

Sources

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-research-review-series-english/curriculum-research-review-series-english>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-curriculum-in-good-and-outstanding-primary-schools-bold-beginnings>

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-1>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2>

<https://birthto5matters.org.uk/download-or-buy-a-copy/>



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Main Priorities

PRIORITY	ACTIONS	WHEN?	WHO?	IMPACT	RAG
SUBJECT EYFS and Phonics					
To increase parental engagement within reading.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To hold workshops that will support parents in reading with their children. Part of the reading café can be used, whereby parents spend 10 mins of this time listening to children read, while receiving support from staff. Send home phonic sound sheets and tricky words. Explain to parents how to record into reading diaries. Explain on welcome day why reading daily is important and what the data shows. 	July 2024	Subject Leader Teachers	EYFS teacher and KS1 lead held a phonics session for parents. This was not as well attended as we hoped. Class teachers write messages on Dojo to encourage parents to read with their children.	
To increase the number of children reaching the ELG in writing and PSED.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To look into other ways of delivering literacy sessions such as drawing club. To introduce traditional games as well as puzzles so that children can learn to take turns. Adults in Chestnut Class to model good communication skills and support children in negotiating difficulties in relationships with peers. Children to begin writing formally as soon as they are ready. 	July 2024	Subject Leader EYFS teacher Headteacher Governors	Twinkl phonics has been introduced and this has enabled progress to be made within writing compared to previous year. PSHE lessons have enabled children to talk about different feelings and learn strategies to manage uncomfortable feelings. Stories around feelings have enabled children to talk about their own feelings. Children are using phonics scheme to support them in writing words and sentences.	
		July 2024	Subject Leader/Early	Squiggle as you wiggle has had a positive impact on writing.	



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<p>To ensure that fine motor development is targeted early on.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that children are taken part in squiggle as you wiggle on entry into school. Opportunities to develop gross motor skills, which will in turn support fine motor skills. Children to practice letter formation daily and number formation in the summer term. 		<p>Years teacher</p>	<p>Fine motor activities such as pegging clothes has had a positive impact on fine motor skills. Use of new play equipment is supporting gross motor skills. Letter formation has improved significantly using new scheme.</p>	
<p>To assess phonics regularly in order to ensure that we are identifying children early who need more support with this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children in Year 1 and some Year 2's to take half termly phonic screening check papers as well as twinkl phonics assessments. Children to be placed in an intervention when staff identify that more support is needed. SL will also monitor phonics termly to ensure that scheme is being taught fast and with fidelity. 	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>Subject Leader Teachers</p>	<p>Half-termly phonics screening assessments and twinkl assessments have identified children that need more support with their reading. This has also enabled teachers to identify children who need some after school tutoring.</p>	
<p>To improve the Early Years outdoor area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop outdoor space to enable children to plant and access larger-scale construction. To monitor children's use of the outdoor area in order to find out about their interests. 	<p>July 2024</p>	<p>Subject Leader</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New climbing frame has been installed and is being used regularly by the children. New water wall has been installed in outdoor area. 	