

EYFS Curriculum: Intent, Implementation and Impact

Intent

At King's Oak Academy, we are passionate and supportive of the development of children as unique individuals and we are determined to provide all children with a secure foundation for future learning in Key Stage One and beyond. We provide engaging and well-sequenced learning experiences which enable children to learn more and remember more.

Our curriculum is the cultural capital we know our pupils need so that they can gain the skills, knowledge and understanding they require for success. We embed the right **habits for learning through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning** – Play and Exploration, Active Learning and Creative and Critical Thinking.

Many of our pupils arrive below national expectations for their age and a proportion come from disadvantaged backgrounds and with complex needs. **We prioritise teaching them how to listen, speak and meet the high expectations for behaviour** by working hard and being kind. There is a focus on **securing all children's personal, social and emotional development and communication and language skills so that all children develop a sense of self, place and belonging.**

Our enabling environment and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration. Development in these prime areas is supported by **high quality and well-planned continuous and enhanced provision.**



Implementation

Pupils learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed learning opportunities. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have rigorous directed teaching in Authors, Maths and Phonics with daily review time sessions to focus on children's self-reflection against the Characteristics of Effective Learning. The Characteristics of Effective Learning are understood by the children using our whole-school Learning Gems approach. Whole-class sessions are followed by group work where children work with a member of staff to develop their individual next steps. This focused group time means the teacher can systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on learning.

Children are provided with time to initiate their own ideas through 'Discovery Time' where carefully planned enhancements are used to engage and challenge them in the provision. The curriculum is planned for the inside and outside classroom in a cross-curricular way so that children can use play to further explore the curriculum content that they are learning and rehearse, embed skills and promote active learning. The Early Years curriculum has been

crafted to support children to acquire a strong foundation on which to build upon their learning as they move into Year 1 and access the Trust-wide CLF states of being-based curriculum.

Staff consider the best use of classroom areas for learning – for example, physical development and understanding of the world is prioritised when children are learning in the outside areas. Children access a balance of child-initiated, adult-guided play and adult-led learning throughout the day. Teachers set weekly challenges for children to plan to complete across the week. In this way, we ensure that the children have agency over their environment whilst also encouraging children to access areas of learning outside of their immediate interests and therefore enabling a breadth of learning across the curriculum. We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through a vibrant continuous indoor and outdoor provision, alongside trips, visits and regular forest school sessions. Our investment in specialist teachers for forest school mean that children continually receive high quality enrichment.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. Children follow the rigorous Unlocking Letters and Sounds program faithfully so that they achieve good outcomes for reading. Children in Reception start phonics as soon as they start school and reading books are well-matched to the children's phonic knowledge and to the Unlocking Letters & Sounds scheme. Children participate in a daily phonics session, weekly group reading and read 1:1 with a class teacher every fortnight. In addition, partnership with parents is prioritised – parents are invited to participate in phonics sessions at least 3 times a year and teachers communicate well with parents about their child's reading abilities and next steps. We place great value on story time in Reception as a vehicle for inspiring reading for pleasure, a love of literature and as a way of developing children's vocabulary and comprehension. Core Treasure Texts are brought alive through WOW sessions such as a moon picnic while sharing the story *Whatever Next!* Some other key aspects of the implementation of reading include:

- High quality, engaging book corners
- Developing parent links – Bedtime Bear, Books & Biscuits & Lending Library

Developing children's communication and language skills is a priority for our setting. Through our daily Talk for Writing sessions, we provide children with high quality examples of story language, sentence structures and explicitly teach text-specific vocabulary. Our continuous provision provides further opportunities for children to practise using new words and adults model good speaking and listening skills when interacting with children. We map vocabulary that the children will encounter as they move into Year 1 into our continuous provision areas so that adults are able to model and teach those words whilst children are engaging in practical and hands-on experiences in order to well-prepare them for the next stage in their education. Speaking and listening skills are woven into all areas of learning. Some key examples are:

- Use of stem sentences to support full responses
- Recapping on vocabulary throughout the week and terms so children "bump" into prior learning again
- Provocations, such as the Curiosity Cube, to encourage children to speculate and ask questions

We follow the Maths Mastering Number approach in Reception with an emphasis on studying key skills of number, calculation and shape so that pupils develop deep understanding and the acquisition of mathematical language. Pupils learn through games and guided teacher tasks using concrete manipulatives which are then rehearsed and applied to their own learning during Discovery Time.

Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together but we have a range of additional intervention and support to enhance and scaffold children who may not be reaching their potential or moving on children who are doing very well. This includes, for example, Talk Boost; our nurture group with some of our vulnerable children or additional 'catch-up' provision in Maths. Staff also use 'SMART MOVES' which is a intervention focused on physical development. Termly phonics assessments are used to identify children who require additional teaching to keep up with their peers. This is delivered daily by well-trained teachers and teaching partners.

Our regular monitoring of teaching and learning includes coaching and feedback from the phase leader so that teachers develop a good subject knowledge and are effectively supported. We tailor our staff PD to be early years specific where appropriate and are focused on moderating outcomes across the phase and across the CLF Trust so that every member of our team feels confident in making accurate judgements about where individual pupils are and their next steps for learning. We work with the Early Years Federation Network and South Gloucestershire Early Years Team to keep up to date with developments in practice within the EYFS.

Impact

Our curriculum meets the needs of our children, including our disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. We spend 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 analysing data and progress by year group, class, groups and individuals. Every member of staff uses **ongoing observational assessment** to identify children's starting points and plan experiences which ensure progress and some **summative assessments** such as termly phonics and maths assessments to track progress. We use this information on a weekly basis to plan learning experiences and next steps so that knowledge and skills are built cumulatively. During each assessment window, three times a year, teachers update the progress children have made which allows us to assess the impact of teaching and evaluate whether it has been enough.

Our curriculum and its delivery ensures that children make good progress. Children in our early years, on average, arrive with lower starting points than national. During their time in our EYFS, children make rapid progress so that we meet the national expectation for GLD at the end of the year. We believe our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside the rigour of assessment and teaching the children have as they move through the early years – a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.