

EYFS Curriculum Overview

We Love Stories!

The year starts with members of the Foundation Stage team visiting each child at home. During this meeting staff talk to parents and children to find out as much as they can about the new starters and their family; in order to best support the children when they begin school. To help ease the children into school life, children begin on a part time basis which gradually increases over the first few weeks of term. This enables children to build relationships with adults, make new friends and familiarise themselves with the routines and expectations of school.



This topic helps settle children into school as we talk about stories and characters they are familiar with. At the beginning of the term we focus primarily on stories about starting school, linking to their life and how they feel about starting school. It helps the children understand our school routines and gives them the opportunity to talk about their own experiences. The children learn familiar faces such as Biff, Chip and Kipper as well as others through reading a variety of books and stories. We support the children's story telling skills by looking through picture books, retelling stories, creating story maps and using small world resources.

During circle time we ask the children about their favourite books and interests. This supports our planning and activities as children learn best from their own interests. Children have an opportunity to talk about themselves and their families when reading stories about families. They will participate in a daily circle time aimed at developing their self-esteem and increase their sense of community as they find out more about each other. Emphasis is placed on discussing how children are feeling and how they can manage certain feelings.

The book *Harry and the Dinosaurs go to School* inspires our Wow investigation week, where the children have the opportunity to become detectives. Children come to school to find a broken window, missing resources and lots of mess! The children then work out who has been into school by looking at the clues left behind, why they have been into school and how they can stop them from coming back. They use their new knowledge of the routines and expectations at school to work together, teaching the dinosaurs how to respect and look after their resources, focusing on how to tidy up carefully and how to be a good role model.





Colours

Bonfire Night falls during this half term. The children work both independently and collaboratively to explore colour, using a range of techniques, materials and media to create firework pictures to classical music, by representing what they hear through expressive art and design. The children love hearing the story of Guy Fawkes and have lots of fun building bonfires and campfires in the outside area. Talking about the sounds of fireworks gives them the chance to create firework noises by experimenting and performing with percussion instruments and exploring onomatopoeic words.

Having a dark tent allows experimentation

with light, dark, reflective materials and shadow. Going on an autumn walk around school allows children to investigate weather, colours and textures and observe how they change with the seasons. Looking at the book ***The Day the Crayons Quit*** helps children to think about selecting, mixing and using colours for a purpose.

We also celebrate the ***Hindu festival of Diwali***. We think about how materials can be changed when we make diva

lamps. The children learn how to follow a design process: moulding and shaping their diva lamp so it can contain a candle, allowing the clay to dry, painting them in bright colours and finally decorating them. We arrange for visitors to demonstrate Hindu traditions; showing clothing, religious objects and using henna to create mehndi patterns. The children use their fine motor skills to draw around their hand, cut it out and design their own mehndi pattern – they even have a go using chocolate icing!



After retelling stories from other cultures through drama, we start preparations for our ***Christmas production***. We begin by talking about the story of Christmas and discussing how traditions vary between different families and cultures. The children have the opportunity to talk about how their family celebrate different festivals. The children use their mathematical knowledge to order presents by number, size, shape and weight and use their writing and mark making skills to create lists. We look at colourful cards and Christmas decorations and have a go at making some of our own. Learning songs, actions and dances for the Christmas production and performing in front of their families and a large audience increases self-confidence and gives children a sense of pride and achievement.

Explorers The book *Whatever Next* by Jill Murphy, gives the children the opportunity to explore an adventure into space. Children use their imagination to act out the story by travelling in a rocket to the moon. Children recreate what they have seen using construction toys, play dough and paint. *Aliens Love Underpants* by Claire Freedman allows children to use their mathematic skills to go on a hunt around the classroom, sorting the aliens by numbers, type and size. Children also design and create their own alien using their chosen resources and materials.

The children arrive at school to find their classroom turned into a jungle; immersed in leaves, a tree top house and jungle animals. Children put on their back packs, binoculars and explorers hats and go on a journey to discover the jungle. Together, we think about all the things we already know about the jungle and create questions we want to find the answers to. We then spend the day creating the animals we saw using lots of different media including paint, play dough and construction toys.



Rumble in the Jungle by Giles Andreae provides children with a stimulus to learn the names of jungle animals and what they look like. Children then use non-fiction books to find out more information about their favourite animals to share with their class during circle time. Each week children will learn about what the animals look like, their different print and have the opportunity to make each animal to add to the jungle classroom. Children also listen to sounds from the jungle and use a range of

instruments to recreate the sounds they can hear. In small groups, children select the instruments they feel best match each animal and work together to create a performance which is shown to the rest of the children.

We celebrate the *Chinese New Year*. The children discuss similarities and differences with their own traditions and learn about the traditions of Chinese New Year. We have a Chinese restaurant role play area and opportunities for children to try some Chinese foods. We learn about Chinese drumming rhythms in music and make our instruments to perform our own Chinese dragon dance. This week involves lots of art and design technology activities, allowing children to learn to self-select suitable tools, equipment and materials to produce their work, including designing and making a class Chinese dragon, paper lanterns, fans and lucky red envelopes. Children are encouraged to consider their design process and resources and reflect on how to make it even better!



When I grow up

Children's learning will be based around **Superheroes** for the first two weeks of this topic, providing a stimulus for writing opportunities such as descriptive writing and creating imaginative stories. Children will learn that superheroes are not real but the people who help us are the real heroes in our world.

Inviting visitors to help widen the children's knowledge and understanding of people who help others in the community is an important aspect of this topic. We have a number of days for children to meet a variety of people who help us such as a **postman, nurse, dentist, vet, police officer** and even the **fire brigade!** The children have lots of opportunities to ask questions, find out new information and talk about what they would like to be when they grow up.

They enjoy taking part in an interactive learning experience, especially seeing the uniforms, vehicles and equipment used in the work of people who help us and learning about how they are used. We turn our classroom into a mini town, providing children with lots of opportunities to apply their new knowledge. This develops their understanding of the world through role play and mark making in both inside and outside role play areas. The children experiment with ordering parcels by weight and size in the post office and practice using tools and equipment safely to cut and slice foods in their class café. In the building site role play area and using the large construction resources outside, children construct with a purpose in mind and can handle construction materials with increasing safety and control. Making emergency vehicles from paper shapes and junk modelling materials allows the

children to explore the properties of 2D and 3D shape. We explore a range of non-fiction books, identifying features, finding new information and writing labels and captions. In our outdoor area and during P.E sessions, we observe the effect that activity has on our bodies.

Our investigation week follows the story of **The Jolly Postman and Other People's Letters** by Allan Ahlberg. After the postman's visit and researching the journey of a letter, the children must use their detective skills to investigate who a mystery bag belongs to. The children need to look closely at the letters to connect the clues and work out who the letters are for, who they are from and the address they need to be delivered to. The children must make sure each letter gets to the correct address and use simple maps to help the postman deliver them to the right person! The children also take their first trip to the local post office to send a letter themselves so they can experience posting a letter in real life.



Once Upon a Time

At the beginning of each week the staff perform a story or traditional tale, which the children will then learn about. Having a staged area in the classroom allows the children to use drama to retell their favourite stories with their friends using props and costumes, as well as performing their favourite songs and poems. The children begin to explore characters, settings and plots and experiment with ways of changing and adapting stories.



The puppet theatre has a variety of story sacks and boxes for the children to act out. They also have the opportunity to make their own props, puppet characters and write their own scripts and books. As well as writing stories, instructions, lists and letters, further writing table activities encourage the children to create other related items for their production such as programmes, tickets, show times, posters and price labels. Children have lots of opportunities to be creative by painting characters and writing their own stories.



During ***Goldilocks and the Three Bears*** the children have the opportunity to make and try porridge, often for the first time. We talk about how to stay safe around the hob and how the oats turn into porridge using milk. Exploring and making a variety of foods is central to this topic, children begin to notice how materials and ingredients can change. Making bread, gingerbread men, vegetable soup and porridge allows children to follow instructions, experiment with weighing and capacity as well as sequence and create their own recipes.

Designing and making baskets for ***Red Riding Hood*** and becoming builders in ***The Three Little Pigs*** construction site allows the children to experiment

with shape, form and texture. Children are encouraged to evaluate their designs and consider how to improve their own work. A focus on morals and choices supports children in their ***Personal, Social and Emotional Development***, children are encouraged to discuss the choices characters could make and how to make things right.

Wonderful Wellies

The children will experience and learn that there are lots of different places you can wear wellies; in the garden, in the woods and at the farm. This is a very practical, hands on and real life topic, so that children can truly experience everyday things and broaden their understanding of the world around them. To start this topic, the children will read a range of minibeast stories including *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and *What the Ladybird Heard*. A range of media and materials will be used to develop the children's skill in producing

collages based on these books.

We work on composition and performance in our weekly music and poetry sessions. The children will also be able to put music to the stories and poems they have been reading. They have to consider which instruments and noises best match the mood and feelings of the text. We also develop the children's awareness of rhyme and alliteration by playing word games and sharing a variety of poems.

The children will visit a farm as part of this topic. They have the opportunity to see a range of farm animals such as cows, pigs and sheep. The children have the opportunity to learn about each of these animals, understand how to look after them and even get the chance to feed the lambs! We also invite some real life farmers into our class to learn about where our food comes from and tell them about what we have learnt this topic.

Based on Jasper's Beanstalk, the children will understand the process of growing something from a seed. Children will be able to grow a range of plants within our outside area; they will learn to care for and maintain these and record a diary of their growth. Children will have the opportunity to investigate how to grow cress and where it grows best during the investigation week. During this activity they will be asked to justify their decisions, make predictions and talk about what has happened. Creating our own garden centre role play area outside will help the children get green fingers and take on different roles such as a customer or manager.

