

Written by the Early Years Leader

'Nursery and Reception children do well. The children enjoy varied indoor and outdoor learning activities. Children are confident and chatty and form positive relationships with classmates and adults'. Ofsted January 2020

Intent

At Picknalls First School we believe that the early days of learning are the ones that should be full of awe, wonder and curiosity. Where exploring, imagining and constructing are openly encouraged and where staff actively model and lead children on the crucial first stage of their learning journey. We have created a learning environment full of naturally open-ended resources that support staff and children alike in being curious. We recognise children's interests and prior learning before planning learning opportunities that will excite and motivate. We endeavour to provide first-hand experiences that make our curriculum purposeful, relevant and fun. Every child is recognised as the unique and wonderful individual they are. The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. Children are encouraged to be independent in their learning with adults facilitating as required.

Throughout the Early Years, children will have opportunities to develop their social skills and form positive relationships with peers and adults alike. They develop skills in turn-taking and sharing and are given opportunities to practise these skills in a safe and nurturing environment. The use of the natural world is particularly important to the staff and we endeavour to use the outdoor space, including our woodland area, as often as possible. Working outside in fresh air amongst nature is where you see learning come to life and confidence grow.

It is our aspiration that every child leaves Early Years fully ready to meet the challenge of Year One and beyond. That they have the confidence, curiosity and desire to be the best they can be and develop into lifelong learners.

Implementation

In the Early Years, we follow the Early Years (EYFS) Framework, published in March 2021 by the DfES. This framework specifies the requirement for learning and development in the Early Years and provides prime and specific areas of learning we must cover in our curriculum. These are:

Prime Areas

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Birth to 5 Matters is used to develop the curriculum we offer our children. A vital aspect in the development of essential knowledge and skills is the use of continuous provision. This allows children to use, apply and develop taught skills throughout the year. We constantly provide enhancement opportunities to engage, motivate and excite learners linking carefully to their prior knowledge, interests and our topics. We consistently challenge and motivate children to work independently allowing them to take charge of their own learning. Children also access Adult Led learning where adults teach particular skills. Children take part in daily phonics sessions following the Letters and Sounds scheme of work. The skills learnt in these sessions are then transferred back into their independent reading and writing.

'Role play helps children develop their confidence and language. The 'pretend supermarket' is put to good use as children identify the correct coins when 'buying fruit'. Ofsted January 2020

Please refer to our school website for our long-term plan and our EYFS annual curriculum.

Impact

'Phonics is taught well in the early years and key stage 1. This helps pupils become independent and confident readers.' Ofsted January 2020

The impact of our curriculum is measured by assessment procedures which allow us to measure outcomes against all schools both locally, within the ULT (Uttoxeter Learning Trust) and nationally. We measure the percentage of pupils achieving a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD) by the end of Reception year. We continue to achieve and celebrate standards above national in all areas of learning, including reading, writing, maths and GLD.

The impact of our curriculum is also measured by how effectively it helps our pupils develop into well-rounded individuals who embody our values and carry with them the knowledge, skills, attitudes and a thirst for further knowledge that will make them lifelong learners and wonderful future citizens.

Action Plan

- To embed the new Drawing Club programme to support writing in Reception.
- To share best practice with parents through a phonics workshop.
- To continue to train additional staff in Forest School and successfully achieve a Platinum Level Woodlands Trust Quality Mark.
- To share Early Years best practice with other ULT schools through a sequence of workshops.