

EYFS @ The Grove

We offer a skills-based, creative curriculum that emphasises the *process* of learning. It is based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning so that children are able to achieve the Early Learning Goals. All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.



The three **prime** areas are key for developing children's basic skills, for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

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

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

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

When planning and guiding children's activities our staff always consider the different ways that children learn. These characteristics of teaching and learning underpin our day-to-day practice.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Lessons:

Our children experience the seven areas of learning through a balance of whole class teaching, small group activities and play-based independent learning. There are also allocated times for whole class daily 'carpet sessions' of Phonics, Maths and Literacy, with each foundation subject being taught once a week in the afternoon. During children's play the adults interact where appropriate, scaffolding or playing along-side the children to support, challenge or work towards individual next steps.

We also believe that children should be able to lead their own learning; when not working with an adult, our children are able to plan their own learning. They are encouraged to voice ideas, explore and think creatively. Staff support as required, encouraging children to follow their initiative, work through and solve any problems they encounter. It is these skills that we believe will enable our children to become confident, independent individuals who are well prepared for life beyond school.

Environment:

Our curriculum is delivered in a happy, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes curiosity, independence and challenge. Our classrooms are organised into well-resourced learning environments, both inside and out. The inside classroom has a large carpet space, along with areas for role play, reading, mark making/writing, craft and malleable activities, construction, small world play and ICT. Our outdoor provision includes sand, water, a mud kitchen, small world play, writing areas, large mark making, bikes, scooters, along with loose parts such as logs, tyres, planks and large construction blocks. When not in an adult led group, children have free-flow access to the outside area.

Our environment celebrates the success and achievements of all. Display boards are used to celebrate independent learning - work is put up as it happens and this immediate recognition demonstrates the pride we have, and the value we place, in their independent work. We use 'Working Walls' in Maths, Phonics and Literacy to promote independence and reinforce the key themes, skills and experiences we are focusing on.

Resources:

To support our children in leading their own learning we ensure our classroom resources are well chosen and of a high quality. Children are able to choose from a range of open-ended and, wherever possible, natural resources to support their learning. We encourage our learners to take responsibility for looking after our environment and the resources in it – children are taught to 'choose it, use it, put it away' and we provide labelled baskets to support with this. High quality texts are visible in all areas to provide provocations and encourage curiosity about books. Staff routinely audit and enhance provision based on the emerging needs and interest of our children.

Our staff are the most valuable resource we have and we provide at least one teaching assistant per class. All staff recognise the importance that positive relationships have on early learning experiences and development. Staff are committed to building relationships with all children in our care, getting to know them as individuals in order to best support them on their learning journey. Our experienced staff are skilled at modelling, scaffolding and challenging children through positive interactions during their independent play, guided group work or whole class inputs.

