



The Orchard Vision: *Inspiring Success*

Values: *Determination, Courage, Respect*

The Orchard Foundation Stage Policy and Guidance 2023

We want our school to be a centre of excellence for learning- for children and adults and our wider community. We want to create a school where:

- Children make outstanding progress and are confident, independent, enthusiastic and determined learners
- Staff are inspirational practitioners, able and enthusiastic to learn from and develop others
- Everyone shows respect and consideration for other people

We want to grow through supporting and developing other schools and continuing to learn ourselves.

We want our school to be a rich, exciting and fun environment.

Principles of Foundation Stage Education

The Early Years Foundation Stage principles are grouped into four distinct but complimentary themes:

- A unique child (recognising and responding to each child's strengths and needs)
- Positive relationships (between children, staff, parents and carers)
- Enabling environments (creating a safe, inspiring and stimulating learning space)
- Learning and development (ensuring progress, based on how children learn as well as what they learn)

The Early Years Team and Senior Management Team work together to agree the style of Teaching and Learning implemented in the Foundation Stage. We aim to give our children a desire to learn which will stay with them throughout their school years and equip them for life. We provide a balance across all the Areas of Learning to inspire our children to be confident, active learners.

Principles of Foundation Stage learning at The Orchard

Characteristics of Learning

Effective learning in the Foundation Stage is underpinned by three key characteristics:

1. Playing and exploring- Engagement

Children learn best through 'finding out' and exploring their environments. They build confidence and embed learning through engaging with activities with which they are familiar, and they are encouraged to explore new experiences, initiate activities and seek challenge.

2. Active learning-Motivation

All children are encouraged to be active participants in their learning, building an understanding of their own learning journey and what their next steps might be. They show sustained interest and focus in activities, and they become resilient learners and risk-takers. Children take pride in how they accomplish something, not just the end result.

3. Creating and thinking critically- Thinking

Children are encouraged to have and share their own ideas and feel confident in explaining them. Through engaging with new learning, they can begin to develop links between different experiences and extend their thinking. The children can choose and suggest their own ways to approach things, and review and adapt their problem-solving.

In summary, effective learning in the Foundation Stage and The Orchard promotes:

- Children feeling happy, safe and secure, which enables them to become confident learners
- The development of a positive attitude to themselves as learners and as social beings, and of a positive attitude towards others
- The development of independence, through challenge and consolidation, praise and encouragement
- Learning in different ways and at different rates
- Purposeful, practical activities which stimulate all their senses
- Links between different areas of learning
- Child-initiated activities in which children can learn from each other and explore ideas and interests in depth
- Creative use of the indoor and outdoor learning environment
- The use of play as a starting point to aid and enhance previous learning

Principles of Foundation Stage Teaching at The Orchard

Effective teaching in the Foundation Stage promotes:

- Working in partnership with parents
- Practitioners interacting with and supporting children in way that positively affects their attitudes towards themselves, to others and to their learning
- Direct teaching of skills to enable children to become creative thinkers and risk takers
- Teaching of strategies to help children learn to investigate, explore and solve problems
- Practitioners modelling positive behaviour
- Quality interactions with each child and the use of rich and varied language with appropriate open and closed questions to maximise language development
- Careful planning of activities and experiences in the indoor and outdoor environments to provide opportunities for extending and reinforcing learning through child-initiated activities

- Assessment for learning to track progress, analyse attainment, recognise achievement and identify future steps in children’s learning, ensuring appropriate pace and challenge

Our underlying principle is to provide a balanced curriculum which recognises the importance of all areas of learning reflecting both excellence and enjoyment for pupils, practitioners and parents.

Areas of learning

The DFE Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) (as reviewed for implementation September 2021), sets out the prime and specific area of learning, all of which are interconnected:

<i>Prime areas</i>	<i>Specific areas</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal, Social and Emotional Development • Communication and Language • Physical Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Mathematics • Understanding the World Expressive Arts and Design

Early Learning Goals

Each of these areas is divided into sub-sets to form the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs), which are the goals children should achieve by the end of Reception. We have high expectations of all our children. We set termly targets to ensure that the planning for each child is challenging, leading to successful learning and excellent progress.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

In this area of learning children focus on self-confidence and self-awareness, managing their feelings and behaviour, and positive interaction with others. Practitioners help the children to take turns, share and co-operate with each other and with adults. They learn to play games, sing, and dance, complete puzzles, cook and read together. Similarities and differences are explored and celebrated during circle time, PSHE, group discussions and assemblies. Children learn to develop a caring and responsible attitude towards each other and to value and respect different cultures, races and religions. Practitioners model, encourage and reward good behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with immediately and sensitively through a calm, fair but firm approach relating back to shared class rules. Children may be asked to apologise and reflect on their actions. The reasons as to why behaviour is acceptable or unacceptable are always clearly explained. We aim to establish a caring, positive environment where the children feel valued and able to contribute. This atmosphere makes it easier for them to gain control of their own feelings, develop their self-esteem and become more independent. We explore and develop feelings through stories, role play and drama. We extend perseverance and curiosity by providing a range of activities which encourage investigation, collaboration and concentration through play. To support children in self-regulation we use The Zones of Regulation across the school, in Reception children use a lollipop stick to identify which zone they are in, children are taught strategies to help them move between the zones. Our aim is for the children to become confident, enthusiastic, happy and kind, with a positive attitude towards themselves, to others and their learning. We have a Contact Diary in Reception which goes home each day in book bags for practitioners and parents to share information, successes and concerns. Parents can also use email staff via the office email: office@orchard.surrey.sch.uk .

Communication, Language and Literacy

Learning to be literate is a process which must be carefully taught. In our Reception classes Literacy permeates all areas of learning. We see becoming literate as vital to opening the doors to all other learning. We provide opportunities to talk, listen and communicate in small groups, whole class situations and as pairs and individuals. Practitioners model and extend vocabulary and grammar and encourage all children to talk: sharing their ideas, experiences and feelings, taking turns and asking questions. Children use story journals to tell 'helicopter stories' in which practitioners scribe a story told by the children to support their language development. Imaginative play, stories and show and tell times all provide opportunities to talk and to listen. Many of our children are already articulate speakers when they join us. We develop their listening skills by encouraging turn taking, paired and group activities and by the use of Talk Partners. Children also learn a range of specific rhymes, songs and poems over the course of the year, supporting them to develop their vocabulary and communication skills. They have daily opportunities to recall these rhymes throughout the year.

Reading

Reading has a very high priority at The Orchard. We provide a text-rich environment in which the alphabet, captions, phrases, questions, phonemes, key words and labels are displayed throughout the classrooms, cloakroom and shared areas. Practitioners explicitly teach the children to develop their awareness and use of phonics (the sounds in our language) through a daily phonics lesson and tricky words. Children are encouraged to develop a love of books and a desire to read through a wide range of materials. They are taught prosody and comprehension. Books are matched to each individual child's reading ability, through teacher assessments including miscue analysis ensuring that children can fluently read with 95% accuracy. Class teachers will moderate within their year group and may seek advice from the English Subject leader or Phonic Leader if necessary. All children read as part of a reading group to their teacher or to their teaching assistant three times a week and additionally may read individually where identified as necessary. Key learning from group reading is outlined in their reading diaries, parents should make daily comments. Children take home one book matched directly to their reading capabilities and one book to share at home with a parent from the class book library. Practitioners share a wide range of stories, poems, rhymes and information books with the class and with small groups. The books provided for the children to access cover a wide range of genres, themes, demonstrating a range of diverse authors and book characters.

Writing

Writing and mark making is encouraged from the first day at The Orchard. Our overall message is for children "to have a go". We want our children to see themselves as writers and be proud of their achievements and ultimately their progress. Children have constant access to writing opportunities in the classroom, in the creative bay and outside. Opportunities are created in all learning areas including role play, construction areas, the outdoor stage area to provide motivating and purposeful writing opportunities during their play. Reception children are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes which are linked to the cross-curricular themes being developed in the class, for example labelling a map, writing a recipe etc. There is also a wide range of materials for children to self-select in their own classrooms. All children are encouraged to write independently but are given models of writing, taught strategies for spelling and encouraged to use the resources available. Activities include:-

- Tracing and copying individual letters, letter patterns or words (handwriting)
- Daily fine motor activities to improve and develop accurate pencil grip
- Sounding out their writing using their phonic knowledge with an adult helping them to hear and find the letters on the alphabet frieze on the wall or alphabet mats.

Once children are able to use their phonic knowledge independently staff will begin to make a few corrections following the schools marking code. Children learn to form letters in the daily phonics session and practise these during fine motor activities throughout the day. Children with poor motor control benefit from practicing making patterns, tracing, dot to dot pictures, threading, cutting and painting. They are encouraged to make large letter shapes first using a variety of media and learn gradually to reduce the size and sit letters on a line. All children have a printed name card to help them practise their name. We do not use rubbers as we feel that rubbing out children's work devalues their efforts and knocks their confidence to try. Children are taught to identify and cross out their own mistakes when appropriate, then try again.

Physical Development

Young children need to be physically active to release their energy and to develop their co-ordination, fine and gross-motor skills, as well as maintain a good level of fitness. Children need to develop their body awareness in a safe, well planned and resourced environment. They need to develop an understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to keep healthy and safe. At The Orchard we ensure that physical development has a high profile. Children use climbing and balancing apparatus, wheeled toys and small equipment, through their ongoing access to the outdoor area and at playtimes, to extend their gross-motor skills. They are taught to use bats, balls, hoops and ropes and learn to control their bodies through following instructions for skipping, hopping, jumping and running and by exploring in dance and drama where they are encouraged to move confidently and imaginatively. During the Autumn term, children have 10mins fine motor activities each morning and these are extended and developed through carefully planned use of construction toys, tools including scissors, malleable materials and cooking and creative activities. Beyond the Autumn term, some children who have been identified as needing further development in this area may continue with additional fine motor skills activities.

Mathematics

Mathematics is taught through daily adult led sessions and child-initiated learning. Teachers plan carefully to ensure children master mathematical concepts through the use of well-chosen resources, precise terminology, modelling and repetition of key concepts and daily practice through play and teacher focussed tasks. Teachers plan from the GLF Mastering Number scheme , NCETM and EYFS framework document making many cross-curricular links to ensure mathematical learning is enjoyable and purposeful. Mathematical understanding is also developed through stories, songs, drama, dance, construction toys, games, sand, water and imaginative play. The children compare, sort, match, order, sequence and count using a wide range of practical, colourful resources. They are encouraged and taught to use the correct mathematical vocabulary and encouraged to apply their knowledge to solve simple problems and conduct investigations. There is a strong focus on number – including number recognition, subitising, careful counting of objects using one-to-one correspondence, linking amounts to digits and finding one more/less than a number.

Understanding the World (UTW)

In this area of learning children are developing the skills, knowledge and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This provides a foundation for Science, History, Geography, DT and ICT which they learn in year one and year two. To embed skills for subjects taught in KS1, Reception covers the following learning areas in UTW: Past and Present, The Natural World and People, Culture. These areas help children to share in the wonder and excitement as they explore and learn about the natural world and their surrounding environment. In Reception, to excite children about this learning, we have several 'Wow Visitors' throughout the year this includes a space VR experience, ducklings to watch hatch and grow and a dinosaur exploration day where children get to excavate real fossils! Children also explore our school grounds and tend to our Reception garden. We provide opportunities to develop skills in observation, investigation and enquiry by encouraging children to talk about what they see, ask and answer questions, sort artefacts, record their observations and draw conclusions. Children are made aware of the local environment and are introduced through stories, pictures and objects to other countries, cultures and ways of life. We explore significant past events, particularly in their own lives and learn about changes in their world. Children are encouraged to select their own materials for construction, plan their designs and explore different ways of joining materials. We help them to problem solve, predict and reflect on their achievements. Children access laptops in Yellow Bay and learn skills, they then use these skills where using programmable resources, Interactive Whiteboard and cameras.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creativity is fundamental to successful learning. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another, and so extend their understanding. This area of learning encompasses art, music, drama, dance and imaginative play. We provide lots of opportunities for children to express their ideas through a wide range of different activities and resources. We include resources from a variety of cultures to stimulate interest and foster respect for others. We encourage children to feel secure to try new experiences and to experiment with different ways of doing things and we value originality and creativity. Art and Design skills are taught during specific sessions in our 'Creative Bay' and reinforced through a wide range of self-initiated opportunities in classrooms. Children sing, use and make instruments. They have daily access to instruments and a stage and are encouraged to make their own music and sing during play. We create lots of opportunities for imaginative play. Role play areas in classrooms and the outside area are changed each half term to reflect the children's interests. For example, a shop or café is created when the children are learning about 'healthy eating' and a vet's surgery when learning about animals. Drama is used as a teaching and learning strategy across the curriculum.

Play

Play is the central activity through which children learn. Play gives children the opportunities to make sense of their experiences, to explore, practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding they have acquired to develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. Children have opportunities to play indoors and outside. Adults are used to support and enhance play where appropriate. Play encourages children to:

- | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------|-----------|-------------|----------|------------|-----|
| Be creative | Share | Explore | Predict | Have fun! | Estimate | Understand | The |
| Communicate | | | Orchard's | 6Rs | | | |
| Investigate | | | Draw | conclusions | | | |
| Be imaginative | | | Become | independent | | | |

Take risks

Play is an integral not additional part of our curriculum and is planned for in two different ways:

- Planning for a specific outcome, where the teacher structures the play and predetermines the outcome.
- Planning experiences based on children's spontaneous play, for the children to decide how they play, what they play with and who they play with. Here the children determine the outcome of their play. It is often through this self-initiated, learning that children make discoveries, practice and consolidate learning which has been introduced by the teaching staff.

Curriculum organisation

All areas of learning are of equal importance and are taught each week.

- Literacy : daily phonics, Tricky word reading reading/handwriting, recording in individual 'Story Journals', and independent writing opportunities within all indoor and outdoor provision
- Maths: Taught daily as a whole class and working with class teacher in a small group once a week to further develop skill introduced
- Understanding the World: cross-curricular links and themes taught in all classes and opportunities in all indoor and outdoor provision
- Expressive Arts and Design: specific focus in 'Yellow Bay' and cross-curricular links in all classrooms, indoor and outdoor provision PSED, PD and CL underpin all areas of learning and have a continued focus in all classrooms, but also have a specific approach in the following ways
 - Personal Social Emotional Development: continuous modelling of regulating and conflict resolution, children have constant access to the Zones of Regulation and PSHE circle time 3 times a week with a planned focus
 - Physical Development: 1 weekly 30minute sessions, daily morning exercise, and specific times for using the outdoor apparatus.
 - Communication and Language: daily speaking and listening sessions, regular circle times and story journal performances.

Planning

Early Years Teachers meet weekly to plan the curriculum, moderate work and share ideas. A curriculum framework plan shows the skills, key texts, themes and topics for the year. Teachers complete a Medium-Term Plan which outlines skills and content across all the areas of learning, and use this at weekly planning meeting to plan in detail for the week ahead. Plans are regularly adapted to support the interests and next steps of children. However, this never changes the skills that are planned to be introduced.

Assessment

At the end of the Foundation Stage, for each of the 17 Early Learning Goals, teacher judgements will consider whether a child is at one of the following levels:

EXPECTED (Has met the ELG)

EMERGING (Not yet reaching the ELG)

We use the EYFS 'Development Matters' framework to help us to track progress and plan for next steps. Our assessments are based primarily on observation of daily activities and events. This evidence is the most reliable and detailed way of building up an accurate picture of children's individual learning and development. We particularly consider learning that is spontaneous, independent and consistent over a range of contexts. Assessment is a continuous aspect of school life, with the purpose of facilitating learning by ensuring that the teacher plans for the next, most appropriate learning step for each child. Foundation Stage Profiles are passed to the office in June to be submitted to Surrey County Council. Teachers must provide all Early Learning Goal judgements for each child. Teachers complete a written report to parents once a year which is sent out in July. Reports identify children's attainment, progress and next steps. Throughout the year parents are provided with 'next steps' for their child to support at home and children are told their 'next step' which is displayed in the classroom. As part of our assessment staff complete observations of children in which they capture learning moments. All observations are dated, state the ELG being met, whether the learning was self-initiated or adult-initiated and indicate the level of support provided.

The role of the Reception Team Leader

The team leader liaises with the local nurseries and playgroups to organise visits to observe the children in their settings and to discuss individual needs with practitioners. The team leader works with the head teacher to plan visit and start dates for new children and to meet new parents. The team leader organises weekly team meetings for staff to share ideas and initiatives and disseminate new information, discuss training needs and opportunities, review and reflect on policy and practice and to inform staff of forthcoming dates and action needed. The team leader conducts annual reviews with all teaching assistants in the team. The team leader is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Reception school curriculum framework (see Teaching and Learning Policy), and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profiles. The team leader works closely with the head teacher and the Early Years team to ensure that provision across the three Reception classes follows school policies and fulfils the requirements of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and National Curriculum, as appropriate. The team leader monitors the quality of provision through open discussions at team meetings, informal conversations with practitioners, observing aspects of the curriculum and learning environment through classroom observations, looking at displays and children's work and by talking to the children and parents. The team leader leads weekly planning meetings to plan for the next steps in children's learning across all the areas of learning and regular moderating of children's work through written observations and / or work samples. Above all the Early Years team leader provides support, guidance and motivation for the team to ensure that all practitioners do their very best for the young children in our care.

Monitoring

The following practices take place to monitor and evaluate the quality of our work in the Early Years Foundation Stage:

- Classroom observations-Team Leader and Head teacher
- Local moderation with other schools
- Weekly team meetings
- Regular moderation of work, through discussion and sharing samples
- Rigorous data analysis

- Parent surveys/questionnaires
- Informal discussions with staff and parents
- Listening to children's views

Equal opportunities

All our children, parents and practitioners are valued and respected irrespective of gender, race, religion and special educational needs. Teachers plan for individual needs taking into account the children's different starting points and pre-school experiences when they enter the reception classes. Teachers and teaching assistants support all children in the class through focus groups, developing and supporting child-led learning and timely interventions. All learning outcomes are clearly differentiated and matched to individual needs so that all children can succeed at their tasks. Children on the Special Needs Register have an Individual Support Plan (ISP), which is written by the teacher in support from the SENCO, and shared with the parents/carers of the child. We promote positive images to reflect our multi-cultural society through role play, drama, assemblies, circle times, stories, music, dance and art.

Home-school links

At The Orchard education is a partnership between home and school. Our communication with parents is always constructive, honest and informative. Parents are asked to sign our Home-School agreement before their child starts school and a parent group reviews the agreement regularly with the head teacher. Parents are provided with a Reception Talk from the teachers and team leader which provides key information about routines, curriculum and parents requirements to best support their child. Before starting parents complete a questionnaire that provides the class teacher with additional information about their child to help identify individual strengths, needs and to build positive relationships between home and school. We operate an "Open Door Policy" and encourage parents to share information with practitioners whenever they need to, particularly at the end of the day when there is more time available. Class notices are displayed on classroom windows and individual information is given to parents through the contact diaries in the children's book bags (this is particularly valuable for working parents). Parents received a weekly message from the class teacher on Teams which also provides information about what the children have been up to in the week and what the next week will include, remind them of events or inform them of changes. We ask parents to support and extend their children's developing skills by helping them with their reading and by sharing their book corner and library books at home. We encourage parents to make daily comments in the children's reading diaries which go home daily in their book bags. We also ask parents to support the children in practising the specific sounds or tricky words for the week. Each term a Reception newsletter is sent out to parents outlining the themes for each term, listing new vocabulary and giving suggestions for areas to work on, for example, number or letter recognition. Each week there is an update on the classroom window, on the website and on Teams to communicate the learning focus for the next week. We encourage parents to come into school and help with a wide range of activities including cooking, reading, gardening, fine motor skill practise and art and craft. Parents are invited to attend the Christmas performance and various curriculum meetings throughout the year. Parents may request an appointment at any time in the term and Parents Evenings are held twice a year to celebrate progress and to share new targets. Parents are also invited in for an open evening which is an opportunity for them to see work on display and look through the observations made on their child's learning. Once a year parents receive a written report covering the seven areas of learning, informing them of their child's progress, attainment and attitudes to learning. All new parents are invited to join the PTA.

Transitions

From Nursery to Reception We aim to make transition from nursery, playgroup and home as easy as possible and build on the experiences the children have had. Reception staff visit the nursery where most of our children come from, (Manor Road Children's Workshop), in the summer term to observe the children in their setting and liaise with the staff there. Other settings are visited when particular needs have been identified and extra arrangements are required for transition. In the summer term we invite the children to the school to spend an 45 minutes in the classroom becoming familiar with the environment and making friends. All pre-school settings complete a questionnaire sent by the team leader about each child's interests, strengths, needs and next steps. In September we stagger the children's entry to school, starting small groups each day, to allow staff to get to know each group of children and to meet their parents. The office staff collect and hold all medical information and practitioners must read this information before children start school. Some children have individual health care plans which are displayed in the office and staffroom areas so that all staff are aware in case of an emergency. From Reception to Year One outcomes of the Foundation Stage are discussed thoroughly with Year One teachers to inform planning and groupings for the autumn term. Early Years Foundation Profiles, current individual reading lists, ISPs and end of year reports are all passed up to the Year One staff. At the start of Year One, teachers plan to meet the needs of all the children and continue to incorporate play, use of the outdoor learning environment and practical activities into the daily curriculum so there is no marked difference in the pace and style of teaching and learning during the first few weeks. At the end of the Reception Year children spend sessions with their new teacher. Their new Year One teachers use work from their reception year in a display they put up at the beginning of Year One to welcome them to their new classes.

Resources

Resources are shared by the three Reception classes and practitioners must familiarise themselves with the different equipment available in each classroom. Resources are clearly labelled and displayed attractively to enable children to self-select the materials they require. Play equipment is kept in the Early Years shed in the outdoor area and in the shared boxes in our Creative Bay, as well as in each classroom. We are constantly reviewing and extending Early Years equipment including; games, puzzles, visual and auditory aids, tactile equipment, role play resources, outdoor apparatus, sand and water toys and display materials. Early Years catalogues are stored in the office and are available to all staff.

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Next Review Jun 2024