



Leominster Primary School

Our curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage



PRINCIPLES WHICH ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO GOOD EARLY YEARS PRACTICE

1. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage - it is vitally important in itself.
2. Children develop emotionally, intellectually, morally, physically, spiritually and socially, and at differing rates. All aspects of development are equally important and are interwoven.
3. Young children learn from everything that happens to them and do not separate their learning into subjects.
4. Children learn most effectively by doing rather than by being told.
5. Children learn most effectively when they are actively involved and interested.
6. Children need time and space to produce work of quality and depth.
7. What children can do rather than what they cannot do are the starting points in their learning.
8. Playing and talking are the main ways through which young children learn about themselves and the world around them.
9. Children who feel confident in themselves and their own ability have a head-start to learning.
10. Children who are encouraged to think for themselves are more likely to act independently.
11. All children have abilities which should be identified and promoted.
12. The relationships which children establish with adults and other children are of central importance in their development.



“The secret of education lies in respecting the pupil.” (Ralph Waldo Emerson)



“Perhaps the most important single cause of a persons’ success or failure educationally has to do with the question of what he believes about himself.” (North Group of Advisers, 1992)



Individual differences amongst people should be seen as a precious asset which humanity must guard jealously. (Anwukah, 1936)

“First the curriculum is what children and teachers do; second, the curriculum consists of ideas, skills, information and attitudes that teachers set out to teach children.” (Improving Primary Schools : Thomas Report)

Aims and Philosophy

We aim to help each child to develop a range of skills; social, moral, physical, thinking and organisational, as well as to establish and extend the foundations for language, maths and science and other academic areas, in line with the Governments Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Philosophy

It is our belief that engendering a feeling of high self esteem is crucial. How young children learn to see themselves is significantly affected by how others see them. It is through the eyes of others that they begin to see themselves as good or bad, able or helpless, as loveable or not.

Establishing a partnership with parents and building mutual understanding and respect are seen as crucial. Home visiting enables initial contact to take place in the child's home and encourages a continuing dialogue between home and school.

We aim to meet the social, emotional, physical, spiritual and cognitive needs of each child regardless of race, gender, age, class or ability. We aim to give equal opportunity for all children to develop into confident caring self aware people. Schools are microcosms of society and it is essential that they do not perpetuate the inequalities of past and present society. No situation is perfect; however within the limits of time available to us we will do our best to achieve these aims.

We believe that first hand experiences are the best learning tool and we endeavour to create as many 'hands on' experiences as possible. We aim to build on the child's home experiences and on all that they bring with them to nursery. Bringing visitors in and taking children on trips out are seen as important. We aim to foster a sense of achievement for each child by providing opportunities for them to explore and succeed, developing their self esteem, confidence and self worth.

In Nursery and school we follow a programme of 'Values Education'. Every month a certain Value is focused on e.g. honesty, co-operation or responsibility. Parents are informed of the monthly Value and hopefully will encourage and support the children in the carrying out of the Values at home as well as at school. We introduce these Values and reflect on their application to us.

We are using the outside areas to access more of the curriculum. Young children need the opportunity to move freely and a lot of the curriculum can be accessed through outdoor activities.



PROGRESSION

In all areas of the curriculum there are three linked stages of play at which children operate. Although children progress through the stages, they can be expected to move backwards and forwards between them.

(1) Watching and exploring - at this stage children investigate, ie: what is this? What does it do? What happens if? At this stage they tend to move quickly from one activity to another trying to find out about the world and how they can adjust to it. Initially children move from one activity to another trying to explore each new area, afraid of missing something, returning later to explore at more depth. Some children will stand or sit and watch gaining knowledge from others' explorations and the courage to explore themselves.

(2) Representing - At this stage we have progressed from, what is this? To how can I control, manage this? Children at this stage repeat (practise) their experiences in different ways, e.g.; talking, drawing, painting, movement, they are using their discoveries to make sense of their world. Children develop many skills and discover about the properties of many materials. They refine their skills by practise e.g.; at the water, tipping, pouring, with a variety of equipment.

(3) Creative (free-flow play) - The question changes again, "how can I use my knowledge and skills to play my way?"



PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The personal, social and emotional development of the young child is a fundamental building block to all the other areas of learning. It is our aim to foster the child's self worth and to promote high self esteem. The children are encouraged to build relationships with other children and adult, to work as part of a group as well as independently and to have respect for others, adults and children, property and the natural world.

"Effective provision for the moral and spiritual areas of learning and experience is concerned with the developing understanding about the significance and quality of life, and the formation of personal and social values. It secures an ethos in which under fives can reconcile social and emotional conflicts, and build good interpersonal relationships." (Starting with Quality D.E.S)

It is important to provide support for the children to:-

- 1) Make social relationships
- 2) Resolve conflict other than by physical means
- 3) Make decisions and choices
- 4) To share and take turns

The children should be encouraged to:-

Make mistakes without loss of face.

To succeed.

Be aware of the effect of their behaviour on themselves, others and the environment.

Share views and opinions and listen to others.

Have respect for the needs and rights of others and all living things.

The children should be part of the care and working of the daily routines, they need to be involved in simple rule making and to take some responsibility for their own learning. The children should have access to images and literature which displays, in a positive manner, people of other cultures, faiths, both sexes and people with disabilities. The cycle of the Christian year will be observed and appropriate Christian teaching will be included with reference given to the festivals of other faiths. The children will be encouraged to explore a sense of awe, wonder and beauty and to be still and reflective.



HIGH ESTEEM

High Self-esteem comes from realising that others like your ideas and will follow your lead.



High self-esteem comes from always being warmly accepted as an important person in your own world.



High self-esteem comes from people's willingness to listen and take you seriously



High self-esteem comes from feeling that other people enjoy being with you; this feeling comes from frequently being enjoyed.

MEMORANDUM FROM YOUR CHILD

Don't spoil me. I know quite well that I ought not to have all I ask for. I'm only testing you.

Don't be afraid to be firm with me. I prefer it. It lets me know where I stand.

Don't use force with me. It teaches me that power is all that counts. I will respond more readily to being led

Don't be inconsistent. That confuses me and makes me try harder to get away with everything I can.

Don't make promises you may not be able to keep. That will discourage my trust in you.

Don't fall for my provocations when I say and do things just to upset you. Then I'll try for more such "victories".

Don't be too upset when I say "I hate you". I don't mean it, but I want you to feel sorry for what you have done to me.

Don't make me feel smaller than I am. I will make up for it by behaving like a "big shot".

Don't do things for me that I can do for myself. It makes me feel like a baby, and I may continue to put you in my service.

Don't let my "bad habits" get me a lot of your attention. It only encourages me to continue them.

Don't correct me in front of people. I'll take much more notice if you talk quietly with me in private.

Don't try to discuss my behaviour in the heat of a conflict. For some reason my hearing is not very good at this time and my co-operation is even worse. It is all right to take the action required, but let's talk about it until later.

Don't try to preach to me. You'd be surprised how well I know what's right and wrong.

Don't make me feel that my mistakes are sins. I have to learn to make mistakes without feeling that I am no good.

Don't nag. If you do, I shall have to protect myself by appearing deaf.

Don't demand explanations for my wrong behaviour. I really don't know why I did it.

Don't tax my honesty too much. I am easily frightened into telling lies.

Don't forget I love experimenting. I learn from it. So please put up with it.

Don't protect me from consequences. I need to learn from experience

Don't take too much notice of my small ailments. I may learn to enjoy poor health if it gets me much attention.

Don't put me off when I ask *honest* questions. If you do, you will find that I stop asking and seek my information elsewhere.

Don't answer "silly" or meaningless questions. I just want you to keep busy with me.

Don't ever think that it is beneath your dignity to apologise to me. An honest apology makes me feel surprisingly warm towards you.

Don't ever suggest you are perfect or infallible. It gives me too much to live up to.

Don't worry about the little amount of time we spend together. It is how we spend it that counts.

Don't let my fears arouse your anxiety. Then I will become more afraid. Show me courage.

Don't forget, I can't thrive without lots of understanding and encouragement.

Treat me the way you treat your friends, then I will be your friend too. Remember, I learn more from a model than from a critic.

Adapted from the King's Business Magazine for Totline, the playgroup magazine of New South Wales.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Enabling and supporting children towards independence is crucial in the development of a child's self-esteem, how children learn and what they learn go hand in hand.

Adult Roles

The adult role is seen as one of support and extending those areas that the child can nearly do.

The following are important in achieving this

- 1) Establishing relationships of trust with the child so that they develop confidence to take risks in a secure environment and to accept use and overcome failure.
- 2) Being aware of adults influence as role models.
- 3) Having high expectations in all areas.
- 4) Valuing children's ideas and feelings
- 5) Working with others (parents, health agencies,) involved in children's learning and development.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum includes all the learning that the child brings from home and the community as well as the learning opportunities at school.

Children's Roles

Children need the opportunity to be:

*Quiet - Noisy
Creative - Destructive
Solitary - Co-operative
Silent - Talkative
Repetitive - Exploratory
Secure - Adventurous
Sharing - Possessing
Active - Relaxed
An observer - A participator
Restrained - Assertive
A listener - A communicator
Responsible - Without responsibility*

(Taken from Young Children's Learning, Devon. 1990)



COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Language is central to children's learning education. Children are learning to use language and are learning about language by listening, speaking, reading and writing. Children need language in order to learn and every area of developmental experience is building upon and extending the language of the individual child. Children need language to organise and express their thoughts, to communicate with others, to make sense of their experiences and to make connections between the present, past and future, the real and the imaginary.

Children's language abilities vary immensely. Our Foundation Stage Curriculum provides an environment where there is much talk; where children are given time and are encouraged to develop conversations and to listen and share experiences with each other and with adults. Children's experiences of print, reading and writing are varied. We seek to encourage an interest for reading and writing in many and varied ways eg. book corners, shared books for going home, writing areas, reorganising and writing own name, stories and rhyme, labelling of friezes, initial letter sounds and encouraging visual skills by games. The children have an opportunity to develop their visual discrimination skills by playing games and sharing the experience with adults.

Rhythm and rhyme are fundamental building blocks to literacy and their importance cannot be over rated. The children learn rhymes throughout the Foundation Stage and we would strongly encourage parents to share these rhymes with their children and teach and share traditional nursery rhymes.

Skills - to develop listening, language and literacy and communicative skills.

To listen
to ask questions
to respond
to look to observe detail
to consolidate vocabulary
to extend and enlarge vocabulary
develop an interest in books and become a reader

stories, t.v. prog
CDs, radio,
interest areas,
songs/rhymes
rhythm
role play
speaking and listening
observation games
visual skill games



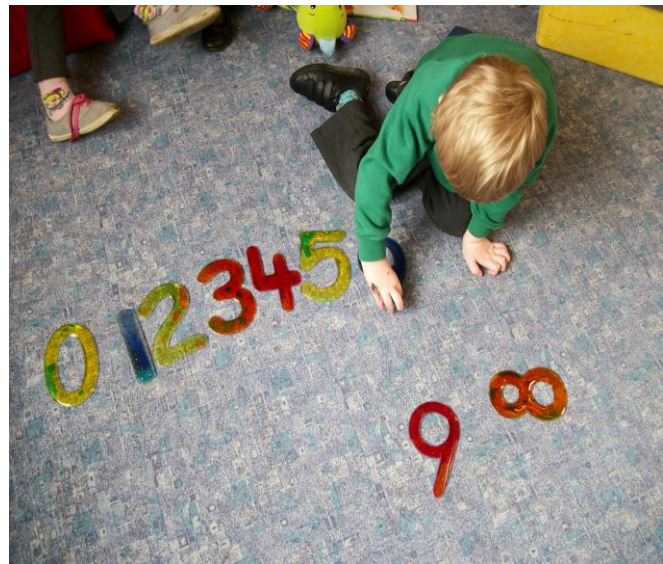
MATHEMATICS / PROBLEM SOLVING, REASONING AND NUMBER

Throughout the Foundation Stage mathematical concepts come from a wide range of experiences, matching, sorting, comparing, ordering, recognition of the properties of shapes, and patterns. The most important area of mathematical work in the early stages is the question of mathematical language which will equip the child for further exploration. Concepts cannot be taught; their formation is dependent on experiences which have something in common. Skills however can be taught and we guard against the very real danger of children acquiring a skill but having no idea of the concept the process represents: eg: a child can be taught subtraction without having knowledge of the concept it represents. The danger of this is that it leads to mathematical confusion and insecurity. We therefore resist the pressure for the very early teaching of measurable skills such as adding up and offer a wide range of mathematical experiences. Children develop a real understanding of concepts by practical play: eg: sand, water, volume, capacity full empty, more, less, by construction, length, height, angles, sequencing, sorting, matching, addition subtraction.

To develop mathematical skills

to sort
to contrast
to question
to count
to look
to classify

to match
to compare
to predict
to hypothesise
to sequence



PHYSICAL

This area of the curriculum enables the child to use and gain knowledge of their body and its movement. Many of the skills developed in this area can be identified in other areas of the curriculum. The Foundation Stage provision includes large and small equipment and the children are given opportunity to develop dexterity and skills both in and out of doors. Many of the activities will help the child to learn control, co-ordination and mobility. Children will have the opportunity to manipulate large and small apparatus and respond physically to sound, music, stories and songs. An awareness of health and safety, their own, and others is an important part of development encouraging a positive attitude towards an active and healthy way of life.

The children will also be aware of the need for simple rules, of working together with regard for others and taking turns.

to develop physical skills (large and fine motor skills)

to run
to jump
to pull
to push
to climb
to throw
to skip
to balance

to manoeuvre
to catch
to roll
to trickle
to hammer
to stick
to paint
to pour



EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

This area of the curriculum incorporates art, craft, design music, music, dance and drama and complements all other areas of the curriculum. In these areas the child can express their personal ideas and develop their imagination. In the early stages children need to experiment and in doing so they are introduced to a wide range of materials media and tools and to become aware of their possibilities. They become aware that ideas and feelings can be expressed in varied ways, art, craft, music and movement and that this is a very individual experience and part of this experience is appreciating others interpretations of an idea. As in other areas the adult supports and instructs with the correct use of tools and materials giving confidence to the expression of ideas and encouraging the child to evaluate their own achievements, and to appreciate the work of others.



KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Humanities

This area of the curriculum is all about people, past, present and future. It is learning about relationships, their own thoughts and feelings and those of others; a lot of this is experienced through role play situations. The children have the opportunity to talk and enact family situations and to talk about families, people and places. A variety of role play situations are created for the children, eg. office, home, hospital. The children are encouraged to widen their understanding of the school environment by going on walks into school and around school and exploring the school site. The children are also taken on walks into the surrounding location and further afield into our town. Through stories and poems they become aware of distinguishing between real people and events and fiction. The children are encouraged to see the pattern of the day and the week and to notice the passing of time.



KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Science & Technology

Children's natural curiosity provides them with the basic tool for scientific thinking. It is important to build on encourage and stimulate natural curiosity ;we seek to provide opportunities for first hand experiences which enable children to use their senses to make observations, to see similarities and differences, to experiment and to make predictions. The adult can support the children in their discoveries and discuss and ask questions and help them to begin to work scientifically. Young children take information technology for granted and are familiar with a range of technology; they are encouraged to use CD recorders, the interactive board, microphones and bee bots along with other pieces of IT equipment such as the light box.



Adults working within the Foundation Stage curriculum should:-

Be aware of the role models they present to children.
Always encourage an understanding of the behaviour that is acceptable.
Show respect for all people and living things.
Foster a good relationship with parents, grandparents, carers and the wider community.
Ensure the moral and spiritual values are encouraged.
Work together with the child, parent and staff to address any difficulties.
Provide individual behaviour programmes if necessary.

Parents supporting the Foundation Stage Curriculum should:-

Be eager to support their children
Share in their child's learning, enjoying books and experiences together.
Listen and talk to their child fostering confidence, independence and a caring attitude.
Feel able to discuss any problems or difficulties.

Topics in Nursery

Interesting topics are chosen in order to ensure that the curriculum is delivered to the children through child friendly, exciting subjects.

Our topics for the coming year 2015 / 2016 will be from the following selection .

Ourselves	Traditional Stories
People who help us	Super Heros
Colour	Animals
Seaside	Night & nocturnal animals
Homes & Gardens	
Easter and Eggs	
Autumn	
Christmas	

Teaching staff consider how each topic can be used to cover the required curriculum areas.

Children's ideas are incorporated when each new topic is introduced.

Each topic covers all aspects of the FS curriculum.

Communication, language and Literacy.
Personal, Social and Emotional.
Creative Development.
Knowledge and Understanding.
Physical Development.
Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy.

Daily routines and activities are in place which support the different ways in which children learn.

The characteristics of children's learning are considered when activities are selected by the teaching staff.

Opportunities for child led activities are always available.

Children have access to learning within the nursery building and also have learning opportunities outside.

Topics in Reception.

Interesting topics are chosen in order to ensure that the curriculum is delivered to the children through child friendly, exciting subjects.

Our topics for the coming year 2015 / 2016 are;

Autumn

Fruit and Vegetables

Ourselves.

Winter and Keeping Warm.

Easter and new life.

Teddy Bears.

Farm Animals.

Seaside and Summer activities

Teaching staff consider how each topic can be used to cover the required curriculum areas.

Children's ideas are incorporated when each new topic is introduced.

Each topic covers all aspects of the FS curriculum.

Communication, language and Literacy.

Personal, Social and Emotional.

Creative Development.

Knowledge and Understanding.

Physical Development.

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy.

Daily routines and activities are in place which support the different ways in which children learn.

The characteristics of children's learning are considered when activities are selected by the teaching staff.

Opportunities for child led activities are always available.

Children have access to learning within the reception building and also have learning opportunities outside.

