

Focus Children

Every week in Foundation Stage we focus on 3 children in each class. During this week we will plan from their interests and incorporate their next steps into our provision.

We value the knowledge and understanding you have of your child and would really appreciate it if you would share this with us on the week when it is your child's turn.

This will ensure that we can plan activities to meet your child's needs, now and in the future.



Your child will have a focus week at least once a term and we will send a sheet home for you to share your thoughts about their current learning, development and interests. The following week we will endeavour to meet with you to talk about your child's learning journey and their next steps.



Additional Information

Please speak to us at anytime if you would like to talk about your child's learning and development in Foundation Stage

Parsons Down Infant School,
Paynesdown Road,
Thatcham,
Berkshire,, RG19 3TE

Telephone: 01635 862475
Fax: 01635 874558
Email: fs@pdp.w-berks.sch.uk

Parsons Down Infant School

How We Learn in Foundation Stage



“Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.” - EYFS Statutory Framework 2012

The children are at the centre of everything we do...

By leading their own learning we believe the children are intrinsically motivated to challenge themselves, take risks and solve problems. When the children are able to make decisions about their learning, it gives purpose to everything they do and sets it in context with real life experiences. As a result of this way of learning our children develop particularly high levels of involvement and independence. Through this approach we have seen our children make excellent progress in their communication and language skills. They are confident to work and make decisions, independently and as a team.



We strongly believe that our child-centred curriculum embeds a love of learning that will last a lifetime.

Learning Stories

Learning stories are a holistic approach to assessing children's development and recognise the child as a competent and active participant in their learning journey. Each story is a reflection of the individual child's learning, and as such, no two stories are the same. We reflect on our interactions with and observations of the child and suggest what next steps they might take to develop their learning further.



Learning stories are an opportunity for the child's family and wider community to be involved in their learning journey. There is a section for families to tell us all about the learning their child has been doing at home. You can use the information in this leaflet as a framework for helping to share your knowledge about your child's learning and development at home and the activities that interest them most.

At school children think about, plan and review their time, making decisions and experiencing personal success, which helps to develop their confidence, self-esteem and independence. It values creativity and individuality, and provides time for child initiated collaborative work. Independent planning time gives children ownership of their learning, providing many opportunities to celebrate everyone's interests and achievements, promoting a culture of success in school. Learning stories help them to see that their learning is valued and what they could try next.



Well-being and Involvement (Laevers 1997)

The rationale underlying the focus on these two processes is that high levels of well-being and involvement lead, in the end, to high levels of child development and deep level learning. This latter concept is centred around the notion that learning should result in significant changes in a pupil's capacity, leading to better outcomes in the way that he or she approaches work, relationships and life in general.

Leuven scale of Wellbeing

Level	Well being	Signals
1	Extremely low	The child clearly shows signs of discomfort such as crying or screaming. They may look dejected, sad, frightened or angry. The child does not respond to the environment, avoids contact and is withdrawn. The child may behave aggressively, hurting him/herself or others.
2	Low	The posture, facial expression and actions indicate that the child does not feel at ease. However, the signals are less explicit than under level 1 or the sense of discomfort is not expressed the whole time.
3	Moderate	The child has a neutral posture. Facial expression and posture show little or no emotion. There are no signs indicating sadness or pleasure, comfort or discomfort.
4	High	The child shows obvious signs of satisfaction (as listed under level 5). However, these signals are not constantly present with the same intensity.
5	Extremely high	The child looks happy and cheerful, smiles, cries out with pleasure. They may be lively and full of energy. Actions can be spontaneous and expressive. The child may talk to him/herself, play with sounds, hum and sing. The child appears relaxed and does not show any signs of stress or tension. He/she is open and accessible to the environment. The child expresses self-confidence and self-assurance.

Level of Wellbeing

Wellbeing focuses on the extent to which pupils feel at ease, act spontaneously, show vitality and self-confidence. It is a crucial component of emotional intelligence and good mental health.

Leuven scale of Involvement

Level of involvement

Involvement focuses on the extent to which pupils are operating to their full capabilities. In particular it refers to whether the child is focused, engaged and interested in various activities.

Level	Well being	Signals
1	Extremely low	Activity is simple, repetitive and passive. The child seems absent and displays no energy. They may stare into space or look around to see what others are doing.
2	Low	Frequently interrupted activity. The child will be engaged in the activity for some of the time they are observed, but there will be moments of non-activity when they will stare into space, or be distracted by what is going on around.
3	Moderate	Mainly continuous activity. The child is busy with the activity but at a fairly routine level and there are few signs of real involvement. They make some progress with what they are doing, but don't show much energy or concentration and can be easily distracted.
4	High	Continuous activity with intense moments. The child's activity has intense moments and at all times they seem involved. They are not easily distracted.
5	Extremely high	The child shows continuous and intense activity revealing the greatest involvement. They are concentrated, creative, energetic and persistent throughout nearly all the observed period.

What does my child learn during Learning and Discovery time?



Every day we have 'Learning and Discovery time'. During this time children learn through first-hand experiential activities with the serious business of 'play' providing the vehicle.

Your child will have opportunities to...

- Write for a real purpose;
- Use mathematical language and explore mathematical concepts while building bridges, filling buckets and digging holes etc;
- Apply reading skills they have learnt in phonics sessions;
- Make plans and follow them through, knowing that they will be valued;
- Extend their vocabulary through quality interactions with each other and with adults;
- Develop an understanding of themselves and the world in which they live;
- Be creative in designing and making with junk, fabric and other materials at the woodwork bench;
- Experiment with movements on a small and large scale, developing both fine motor control for writing and general physical health and wellbeing.

Adults in the setting will have opportunities to...

- Have meaningful conversations with and actively listen to the children's thoughts, interests and ideas;
- Scaffold the children's learning and enable them to take their next steps;
- Model and create a supportive climate for learning;
- Observe, assess and plan stimulating learning experiences.

"As astronauts and space travellers children puzzle over the future; as dinosaurs and princesses they unearth the past. As weather reporters and restaurant workers they make sense of reality; as monsters and gremlins they make sense of the unreal." ~ Gretchen Owocki

The Language of Learning

I noticed that:

- You are an **expert** at
- You are **skilled** at
- You **can do**

I wonder how you could learn

You solved the problem by.....

I planned what I was going to do

I asked someone to help me / to show me

I challenged myself to do it

I tried and tried and now I can do it

I am skilled at / I am an **expert** at....

I watched and I listened

I'm impressed that you:

- Practised**
- Challenged** yourself
- Remembered**
- Listened**

I like the way:

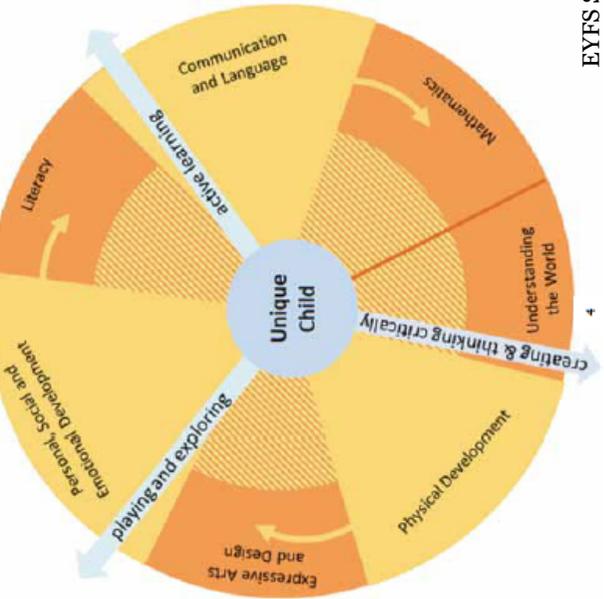
- You **tried**
- You **concentrated**
- You **persevered**

I can see you thought about it / I can see you were

We use the 'Language of Learning' in Foundation Stage all the time with the children (and the adults!). It shows the children the value of their learning and enables them to see what they need to do in order to be a good learner.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the prime and specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected.

- The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment - playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically - underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.
- The **prime** areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS.
- The **specific** areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas and provide important contexts for learning.



Prime areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas.

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

Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society

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

The Unique Child reaches out to relate to people and things through the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**, which move through all areas of learning.

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Children develop in the context of relationships and the environment around them. This is unique to each family and reflects individual communities and cultures.