

Gamesley Primary School



Early Years Teaching and Learning Policy Academic Year 2022/23

Our Intent

At Gamesley Primary School we provide as many opportunities as possible for our children to develop as independent, confident, successful learners. We want our children to leave us not only with high aspirations for their own futures, but also knowing how to make a positive contribution to their community and the wider society. Our curriculum places a high focus on developing children's moral, spiritual, social and cultural understanding. We aim for every child to enjoy their education and make the best progress in all areas of learning.

Pupils at all levels are supported to achieve their full potential. Higher achieving pupils are challenged and supported through appropriate deepening and broadening activities. Those who struggle with aspects of their learning are encouraged and given targeted support to embed core skills while still accessing and enjoying the wider curriculum.

The school's focus on curriculum development has been carefully designed to ensure coverage and progression. We provide our pupils, many of whom have limited experiences at home, with a memorable and engaging curriculum which includes a wide range of opportunities through which they can learn and develop a range of core, transferable skills. We take the children out into their local and wider community as often as possible and invite visitors into school. We give them knowledge that is outside their immediate life experiences. Through our curriculum, we aim to create an interest and thirst for more knowledge, to raise aspirations, engender a sense of personal pride in achievement and provide a purpose and relevance for learning.

As the school population includes a very high percentage of disadvantaged pupils, we provide access to activities that children may not otherwise experience. We recognise that the children need support to develop self-value and aspirations for their future and for their community. At the same time, we maintain a strong focus on the precision teaching of the core skills of literacy and maths so that our children can leave us not only with a desire to learn, but also with the tools they need to access the curriculum at secondary school and beyond.

The curriculum is planned to ensure progression of knowledge and skills across school. Our curriculum design ensures that the needs of all children can be met through high quality first wave teaching, supported by targeted, proven interventions where appropriate.

Subject leaders play an important part in the success of the curriculum by leading a regular programme of monitoring, evaluation and review. They collate evidence in subject leaders' files and regularly hold pupil interviews to check on their acquisition of knowledge and skills in their subjects.

Enjoyment of the curriculum promotes achievement, confidence and good behaviour. We encourage children to have a sense of pride in the presentation of their work. High quality visits and visitors enhance the curriculum and provide opportunities for writing for a purpose. To promote physical health and wellbeing, a range of extra-curricular clubs gives learners an opportunity to access a variety of sports after school hours.

Our PSHE scheme (Jigsaw) and weekly "R-Time" lessons provide children with opportunities to discuss and learn about personal health, wellbeing, safety, relationships (including anti-bullying work), differences and aspirations. Values education is given a high profile throughout the school in weekly praise assemblies and class lessons based on the Cornerstones "Yoi Moji" materials. Our diversity work helps children to realise that everyone is special and unique and we should celebrate differences and different kinds of families.

In recognising the development of the whole child, the pastoral support given to children so they can access the curriculum is a priority. A range of programmes of support are provided for children where a need has been identified such as self-esteem, anger management and bereavement.

Our Whole School Improvement Priorities for Learning and Teaching in 2022/23

- To teach the basic skills of maths and English (particularly writing) rigorously and consistently, identifying gaps and barriers to learning and addressing these as a matter of urgency
- To ensure interventions and support including tutoring are correctly targeted to ensure all children make the best possible progress
- To ensure the learning needs of the most able children are met
- To support every child in developing a sense of belonging and emotional and physical wellbeing
- To develop stakeholder voice

Our Priorities for Learning and Teaching in 2021/22

- To focus on vocabulary acquisition to support children's discussion and thinking skills
- Provide a range of engaging experiences to enrich the curriculum
- Ensure high quality continuous provision at all times to support teaching and learning
- Develop provision for more able learners both through direct teaching and development of the learning environment.

Implementation:

Resources: *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage/Cornerstones / RWI phonics / RWI Talk Through Stories / Nelson Handwriting / TWINKL/ NCETM Mastering Number/ White Rose Maths /NELI*

The Curriculum

Our children follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and inter-connected.

These areas are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive. These are known as the prime areas. There are also four specific areas, through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and Language – Listening, Attention and Understanding and Speaking
- Physical Development – Gross Motor and Fine Motor Skills
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Self Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships

The specific areas are:

- Literacy – Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing
- Mathematics – Numbers and Numerical Patterns
- Understanding the World – Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities and The Natural World

· Expressive Arts and Design – Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive

Curriculum for Prime Areas of Learning-

Resources: *Jigsaw Scheme of Work, R-Time, Yoi Moji Values Lessons, Cornerstones Maestro*

Our aim through our weekly PSHE lessons is to provide a whole school curriculum which builds social skills, grows emotional literacy, enables mental health and nurtures children’s positive relationships with themselves and with others. Many of our children live in homes, which are impacted by poverty or abuse, many have been exposed to multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences. It is not enough for us to depend on nurturing the skills and values they need implicitly; we believe we have to build our children’s self-esteem, resilience and confidence explicitly. We believe that when taught well, PSHE lessons can improve our pupil’s capacity to learn, their resilience and emotional well-being and mental health and ultimately to improve their life chances. We have chosen to adopt the “Jigsaw” PSHE programme because not only does it deliver the PSHE curriculum; it also includes emotional literacy, social skills and spiritual development.

The Jigsaw scheme of work covers all aspects of personal, social and health education including the new requirements for the teaching of RSE in Primary Schools. All the Jigsaw lesson plans and materials can be found on the teachers drive on the school server and on the staff hub. It can also be accessed on-line through the Jigsaw website.

Our PSHE programme also includes a strong safeguarding focus through developing resilience, positive self-esteem and confidence. Our aim is to help our children recognise when they feel uncomfortable in a situation and to know who to trust and to speak up to for help. We want all our children to respect themselves and their bodies and to know what healthy relationships feel like.

Autumn 1 Being Me in My World	Autumn 2 Celebrating Difference	Spring 3 Dreams and Goals	Spring 4 Healthy Me	Summer 5 Relationships	Summer 6 Changing Me
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The Jigsaw scheme is complimented by our Values education programme, which is delivered through Cornerstones YoiMoji.

Through our core values of kindness, bravery, honesty, patience, curiosity and independence, we give our children the basis on which they can understand the FBVs. In addition, we teach the full range of Yoi Moji Values. Each week there is a value in focus which is taught explicitly in one of the class based Acts of Worship, and our values based “Stars of the Week” awards are presented in our weekly praise assemblies. Class Dojo rewards are linked to the Yoi Moji values.

The children also access “R Time” activities once a week in class, again as one of their daily Acts of Worship. R Time includes no academic challenge at all and instead is designed to foster good relationships, good manners, positive behaviour and respect for one another through enjoyable activities.

Most PSHE work is recorded in children’s individual “Learning Books” and examples of whole class learning are kept as evidence in the class values books.

We teach YoiMoji Values for EYFS; one value is taught each week in the following order and then repeated every week throughout the year: **kind, brave, honest, patient, curious and independent.**

Physical Development-

We recognise in Early Years that children need to develop their gross and fine motor skills as soon as they start school. This will lead onto them becoming successful at using tools such as pencils for writing. We need to provide opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, so that children can develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Our indoor environment is carefully planned for children to develop and practise fine motor skills. These are planned as part of and to enhance our exciting Cornerstones Maestro curriculum and we also observe the children and plan for specific needs for individual children. Our outdoor environment is designed to support children's gross motor skills by climbing, riding on the bikes, brushing up and digging in the large sand pit. We identify children who need to develop these skills further and direct them to engage in this sort of play. Cornerstones Maestro also plans for the children to develop specific gross and fine motor skills through an exciting curriculum and these are taught directly to the children and then practised within the environment.

After the Easter break, the children begin to access more formal weekly PE lessons planned from the PE Passport scheme.

The children also take part in the Bikeability programme each year.

Curriculum for Specific Areas of Learning-

Literacy- *Cornerstones Maestro, Read, Write Inc Phonics*

Our English Curriculum in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 is consistent and repetitive. Our children typically enter Reception with very low baselines in early literacy and language skills. The familiar structure to the daily lessons supports our children's learning needs and allows them to focus on the content of the teaching rather than coping with changes to structure and organisation.

Read, Write Inc Phonics continually recaps prior learning and then build on it in small incremental steps enabling the children to embed their skills with confidence. The reading materials we share with home are also based on the structured RWI scheme and support parents in helping to develop their children's reading and writing skills at home.

RWI also offers many opportunities for affirmation and praise, which supports our children's confidence, self-esteem and resilience.

Through the "Talk through Stories" approach, we give our children the opportunity to immerse themselves in high quality texts. Some of these books may be pitched above the children's individual fluency levels, but this approach supports their comprehension skills, introduces new vocabulary and goes some way towards compensating for the lack of quality books available in many of our children's homes.

Children are also able to choose from an extensive range of scheme and "real" books to borrow and read at home. This is also the rationale behind our reading rewards scheme where children are able to choose a new book from the school "bookshop" each time they accumulate "50 reads" at home. They can also purchase books for the nominal cost of £2.00.

The ***RWI Phonics*** programme provide the direct, explicit teaching of writing while the wider curriculum also provides opportunities for them to apply these skills, we believe the overriding priority for our younger

children is to ensure that they have the tools they need to write securely and accurately in a range of contexts.

Both **RWI** and the wider **Cornerstones** Curriculum offer many opportunities for purposeful speaking and listening through “Hold a sentence” work, retelling stories, answering questions, debates, performances and presentations of work. Opportunities also spring from maths lessons when children reason and explain their thinking.

We teach new vocabulary explicitly and in a structured way because so many of our children are not exposed to high quality vocabulary at home. Some of our children are not read to or even spoken to regularly in a meaningful way. We aim to teach them to use the vocabulary they need to access the curriculum, to widen their thinking skills and to express their thoughts, ideas and feelings. They won't be able to think deeply about something unless they have the language to express those thoughts.

Through our focus on Speaking and Listening and vocabulary acquisition we aim to ensure that our children have the skills they need to become reflective, empathetic and purposeful member of their communities and to have the skills, self esteem and confidence to be able to succeed in the wider world.

Reading at School

- The **Read Write Inc (RWI)** phonics scheme is used for pupils in Reception, Year 1 and for some in Year 2, and also for those pupils still requiring a phonics intervention on a 1 to 1 or small group basis beyond Year 2.
- All elements of the **RWI phonics** scheme are taught with fidelity, including writing other than handwriting which is taught discretely outside the **RWI** lessons
- High quality picture books, short stories, poems and nursery rhymes are shared with children in Reception and KS1 each day, in some cases using the **RWI “Talk through Stories”** programme.

Reading at Home

- Until they are able to read and blend the RWI Set One Speed Sounds, children take home a ‘share a story’ picture book each day. These books are changed whenever children request that we do so and children are encouraged to select their own books.
- Children accessing the RWI phonics scheme, take home a **RWI Book Bag book** or other decodable phonics reading book matched to their phonics’ group. Parents are asked to share these books with their children daily following the programme below. Phonics based books are changed every Monday and Thursday but should be sent back into school each day so reading diaries can be checked, children read with etc. Children continue to select story books to share at home as well.

Reading assessments

Formative reading assessments take place daily within the **Read Write Inc.** lessons.

At least 6 RWI assessments take place each year. These are undertaken by the RWI Leader and used to inform appropriate groupings for RWI and the correct reading level for home readers.

‘Talk Through Stories’ also allows us to continually assess children’s comprehension skills through carefully planned questioning.

Writing Assessments

Formative writing assessments take place daily through carefully planned activities, during Read Write Inc lessons and in child-led learning.

6 pieces of writing are assessed against the Development Matters Statements and these are used to inform children's individual next steps in the learning and inform future planning.

Mathematics-

Resources: *NCETM Mastering Number, White Rose, Cornerstones.*

The NCETM Mastering Number programme aims to secure firm foundations in the development of good number sense for all children. The aim over time is that children will leave KS1 with fluency in calculation and a confidence and flexibility with number.

We decided to use published maths schemes as the basis of our teaching because our children make the best progress when there is consistency of approach. Both *Mastering Number* and the *NCETM* scheme not only offer this consistency, but also many opportunities for varied fluency. This ensures that children fully understand what they have been taught. We want our children to develop an understanding and sense of number, be able to select the most appropriate method for each task and to apply skills to multiple contexts.

We teach mathematical vocabulary explicitly. All vocabulary for each unit is displayed in each room and is referred to.

The children will learn and develop number sense through the following strands following the Mastering Number programme-

Subitising	Cardinality, ordinality and counting	Composition	Comparison
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White Rose is used to supplement the areas of Maths not covered in the Mastering Number Programme and these strands are identified and planned for using a Medium-Term plan.

Maths happens every day in EYFS in a structured lesson. The lesson always starts with direct teaching and then the environment is set up in a way for children to practise their skills in a practical and play based way. Adults either support children through adult led small group learning activities or by engaging in children's play in the environment.

Assessment within lessons leads to "more teacher time" to enable identified children to "keep up" rather than "catch up" with their peers.

Maths assessments

Teachers assess pupil progress daily within lessons. Development Matters Statements are used to support assessment and planning in Maths and the Early Learning Goals for the end of the year.

Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design

Resources: *Cornerstones*.

Our Cornerstones Curriculum is outlined below. These projects support the children in making sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology, and the environment. It also develops a love for learning and a context for the children to apply their basic skills to a purposeful context.

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 3	Spring 4	Summer 5	Summer 6
<p>Let's Explore</p> <p>This project teaches children about the environments that they share with others, including their homes, school and places in the local community.</p>	<p>Marvellous Machines</p> <p>This interest-led project teaches children about the technology that is part of their daily lives and how machines help us. The project gives children the opportunity to build and create marvellous machines.</p>	<p>Long Ago</p> <p>This project teaches children about how they have grown and changed since they were babies and how life in the past was different from today.</p>	<p>Ready, Steady Grow</p> <p>This project teaches children about food and farming and explores themes, including where food comes from, what plants and animals need to grow and survive and what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.</p>	<p>Animal Safari</p> <p>This project teaches children about the animals that live around the world, how to look after animals and the importance of caring for our local and global environments.</p>	<p>On the Beach</p> <p>This project teaches children about the plants and animals that live at the seaside. It also explores holidays in the past and the importance of keeping safe in the Sun.</p>
<p>Build It Up</p> <p>This project teaches children about structures and materials and gives them the opportunity to work in groups to create collaborative structures.</p>	<p>Puppets and Pop Ups</p> <p>This creative project explores puppets and pop up books and gives children the opportunity to make puppets and use them to tell exciting stories.</p>	<p>Stories and Rhymes</p> <p>This project teaches children about traditional stories and rhymes and gives them the opportunity to play with words and learn new vocabulary.</p>	<p>Signs of Spring</p> <p>This project teaches children about the changes that happen during the spring, including weather and the festivals that are celebrated at this time of year.</p>	<p>Creep, Crawl and Wiggle</p> <p>This mini project teaches children about invertebrates that live in their gardens and local environment.</p>	<p>Move It</p> <p>This mini project teaches children about the importance of exercise, sleep and a balanced diet, and explores outdoor, summer games and activities.</p>

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

The EYFS Framework identifies three characteristics of effective learning. The EYFS team plan activities within with these characteristics in mind:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

At parents' evening, we inform parents on their child's skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of effective learning. At the end of Reception, teachers also provide parents with a written report which includes information on each characteristic. Year 1 teachers are also provided with a report and there is a handover meeting during the Summer term to discuss each child's stage of development and their needs during transition.

Teaching and Learning:

A mixture of direct teaching, adult and child-led learning allows children to practise new skills and take ownership of their learning by applying it in different situations. Carefully planned direct teaching and adult-led activities are important to ensure children learn specific skills and knowledge. Through children's carefully structured play, they can practise these skills and we can then see how much of this learning children have embedded.

Reception children follow daily timetables, which provide set times for direct teaching, adult-led group sessions and time for children to learn through continuous provision. Teachers plan for learning opportunities based on children's needs and any gaps in their learning. Staff make on-going assessments of the progress and attainment of each child and use this information to aid future planning.

Learning through play (child-led learning)

Learning through play and practical hands-on experiences underpins our approach to teaching and learning in Early Years. Through play, children develop a number of skills such as language, self-regulation and creativity, social and intellectual skills. Children are able to practise and learn new skills and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace.

Independent learning takes place indoors and outdoors and it is in these different environments that children explore and discover their immediate world. For some of our children their play/independent learning is natural and spontaneous, but others may need extra help from adults. This is identified by playing with and observing the children in their play.

Adults spend time modelling and then provide time, space and appropriate resources, which inspire independent learning opportunities and the imaginations of the children. They observe play and join in when appropriate, watching and listening before intervening. Adults model, observe, facilitate and extend children's learning. They will often ask children questions about the independent learning in order to develop their language and communication skills.

All staff value child-initiated learning and provide safe but challenging environments that support and extend learning and development.

Direct Teaching and Adult-led learning

Our Curriculum in the Early Years is consistent and repetitive. Our children typically enter Reception with very low baselines. The familiar structure to the daily lessons supports our children's learning needs and allows them to focus on the content of the teaching rather than coping with changes to structure and organisation.

Through direct teaching and adult-led activities we can introduce children to new ideas, provide opportunities for them to develop their skills and ensure that they experience all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In addition to child-initiated learning, children are provided with daily adult-led sessions.

Our Reception children each have daily teaching sessions in Literacy (***Read, Write Inc***), Maths (***NCETM Mastering Number, White Rose Maths***) and the wider curriculum (***Cornerstones*** projects, ***Yoi Moji Values, Jigsaw, R Time and Project Evolve***). Children also have at least one daily story session and the children are taught story vocabulary using ***Talk Through Stories*** from Ruth Miskin every day. Detailed information on these schemes can be found in our Whole School Teaching and Learning Policy.

These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc. Teachers plan sessions based on the children's needs and differentiate them accordingly. Children are active learners during these sessions and they are provided with skills which they can then go and practise independently.

Adult-led learning can also take place during continuous provision and indoor and outdoor activities are planned to help address gaps in children's learning. Adult-led learning can be planned for or it can be reactive to the children's play and to providing challenge in child-led learning.

Outdoor learning

Outdoor learning is a fundamental part of the Early Years and it has a positive impact on children's development. Being outdoors offers children the freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active. It also offers opportunities to do things in different ways and on different scales compared to indoors. Outdoors is both a teaching and learning environment, where there is a balance of child-led and adult-led learning. ***Cornerstones*** provides outdoor learning opportunities that are planned for and adult led. We use our outdoor space to develop children's gross motor skills on a larger scale. We have a garden area that is focused on developing a love for the world and nature around us. This provides the children with a hands-on approach to Understanding the World, an experience that we feel our children lack before they start school.

Both outdoor areas are comprehensively risk assessed and daily checks are completed by staff.

Parent Partnership

Parents play a key role in children's development and it is essential for us to have a strong partnership with parents to ensure each child reaches their full potential. We encourage parents to make contributions and share information about their child's learning and development. We also regularly share information on children's progress and next steps in learning. We invite parents in for assemblies and Stay and Play sessions to ensure they feel valued and develop good relationships with staff members. We do this through:

- Providing home learning ideas that link to our Cornerstones Projects
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: special assemblies, Stay and Play sessions, performances, sports day, etc.
- Sending a reading diary home so parents can comment on their child's reading and use it to communicate
- Sharing school observations through ***Class Dojo***
- Encouraging parents to upload their own observations to ***Class Dojo***
- Sending out an annual report and holding at least two parent teacher meetings each year
- Holding welcome meetings at the start of the year for all parents
- Providing an opportunity for parents to meet key people before their children join our Reception class

Assessment and Feedback

- All children's work is to be acknowledged either through verbal feedback (V) or at least *light marked* by the teacher or a member of the support team or self-marked by the children.
- As much marking as possible will be done during the lesson with child present.
- **Pink** pen is used to identify features that are particularly successful (**tickled pink**) and aspects which require improvement are indicated in **blue (something to do)**; **purple** pen may be used for quick marking (i.e. in maths) or for general comments
- Marking is against evaluation criteria when this has been shared with the children;
- Marking is done in a clear legible hand

Assessments

Assessments take place as soon as possible after the children join the school and the outcomes are recorded on Arbor in line with the assessment points for the rest of the school.

Throughout the children's time in Reception, staff collect a variety of evidence about the children's learning and progress including

- Work in children's learning books
- Through working with children in continuous provision
- Adult comments and notes in children's books and through informal observations

The children's progress is recorded on Arbor throughout the year in line with the agreed Trust timetable.

Impact:

Our children start from very low baselines. We work extremely hard for all our children to make outstanding progress across all of the areas of the EYFS curriculum. Progress is evident in observations by staff, learning books and data.

The impact of our curriculum is measured by how effectively it helps our children develop into well rounded individuals who embody our school values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens. We endeavour for our children to be 'Key Stage 1 Ready'.

Our children make strong progress academically, emotionally, creatively, socially and physically. This is evident in the good behaviour that develops when starting school for lots of our children. It is presented by the children and the consistent behaviour policy supports this. Knowledge, understanding and skills are secured and embedded so that children are prepared for their new year group.

At the end of EYFS our children;

- have strong communication skills, both written and verbal.
- our children also listen respectfully and with tolerance to the views of others,
- take pride in all that they do and always strive to do their best,

- demonstrate independence, emotional resilience and the ability to persevere when they encounter challenge,
- develop a sense of self-awareness and become confident in their own abilities,
- are kind, respectful and honest, demonstrate inclusive attitudes and have a sense of their role in our wider society.