



# **Brambleside EYFS Teaching and Learning – Structure and Ethos**

## **The Team:**

2 x Early Years Teachers, 4 x Teaching Assistants

## **Settling in each day - PSED / CLL opportunities**

- In the first 10 minutes of the day, parents are invited into Foundation Stage to help settle children. This is an opportunity for parents to engage in conversation about the learning with their children, start them off on their morning work, help change their reading books and speak to the staff.
- Adults in the room use this valuable time to engage in conversation with children and parents, ensure they are settled and help them with the morning routine.

## **Communication & Language**

- **WellComm:** During the first term of school, identified children are assessed using the WellComm assessment. This identifies any gaps in children's understanding and allows staff to focus on these with interventions.
- **Vocabulary:** Staff use conversations with children to develop vocabulary as we believe that new vocabulary should be learnt in context to enable the children to then use the words themselves. Adults ensure they are using ambitious vocabulary during their conversations, as well as up-levering words children say. For example, child says, "it is cold today", adult replies, "it is freezing!" In addition to this, adults discuss vocabulary in books during story time and add these words to the classroom displays.
- **Speech sounds:** During the first term of school, identified children carry out a speech sound assessment to identify exactly which sounds the children are working on. From this, class teachers and the SEN Co-ordinator will decide whether to refer the children or target the child in other ways for example constant modelling & encouraging the children to repeat the words back correctly.
- **Time to talk:** In Foundation Stage, we believe the most effective way to improve children's communication & language is to give them time to talk. Because of this, the children get partner talk time during all sessions, as well as at least 2 hours of playing to learn daily, allowing them the opportunities to talk to adults as well as children as positive role models.

## **Personal, Social & Emotional Development**

We want children to leave Foundation stage as confident, happy, independent and resilient children and learners. Our Foundation Stage is set up in a way that promotes this throughout the school day. This is through independent learning areas such as independent snack where the children pour their own drinks and spread their own



jam, as well as cooking areas where by the end of Foundation Stage the children should be able to prepare their own cakes. Adults are also there to nurture and give the children the skills they need to bounce back, develop their relationships, manage their own emotions and develop their skills to deal with conflicts etc.

## **Reading**

In Foundation Stage, we make sure that children develop their Phonics skills through daily, discrete Phonics sessions alongside initiatives to develop a love of reading.

- **Reading scheme:** Children access self-choice books daily to take home and share with adults from the 'Rising Stars' reading scheme. The children are encouraged to independently change these when they enter every morning. The children are given a book band to choose books from depending on their phonics skills, making sure that the sounds in the book are linked to the sounds they are learning following the Letters and Sounds scheme.
- **Shared reading:** The children have at least one daily whole class reading session during carpet times. These are timetabled in to ensure they are protected each day.
- **Discrete Daily Phonics teaching:** Phonics is taught in 25 x minute sessions, 5x a week. Initially this will be Phase One consolidation from the very start of reception, with a view to starting Phase Two as a whole class before October half term and introducing some phase three sounds before Christmas. Individualised support will be put in place for children identified on entry as being 'working within' Phase Two.
- **Phonics interventions:** Teachers quickly identify children with gaps in their Phonics and introduce weekly interventions by Autumn 2 term depending on the area of Phonics they are struggling with, e.g. memory of sounds / oral blending etc.
- **Resources:** Resources will be available throughout the continuous provision to support and consolidate phonic learning such as sound mats and tricky word mats, as well as their sounds with letter formation clues on show around the rooms.
- **Helicopter stories:** At the end of the day, 3-5x a week, the children are invited to sit around the stage and act out the helicopter stories children have created.
- **1:1 reading at school:** All children will be read to at least once with an adult at school each week. The lowest 20% of children will be read to 3x a week, and other identified children will be read with 2x a week – these are the children with little parental engagement at home, or those identified at working below the expected standard in their reading. The children will share a levelled reading book, as well as practise their sounds and tricky words from their sound bag. Adults will fill out the child's individual reading record sheet to comment on their reading skills during the session and create next steps for next time.
- **Reading for engagement – Reading teddies:** The children have 'Reading Teddies' which they adopt in the first term of school to read with at home. The



children change these at the end of each big term to encourage reading at home.

- **Reading for engagement – Star of the day:** Star of the day takes home 'William the Reading Wizard' and a story to read during the evening at home.
- **Reading for engagement – Lending Library:** 'Bookflix' is our lending library where children get the opportunity to take home a storybook or educational game to read / play with their family once a week. EAL books are also on offer.
- **Reading for engagement – Family Reading:** On a Tuesday afternoon from 3:00pm- 3:15pm, parents are invited in to share a story with their child before going home.
- **Reading for engagement – Books throughout provision:** There are reading areas and books throughout the provision in Foundation Stage, as well as an area dedicated to stories with a puppet show, huge reading chair and small world etc.
- **Reading for engagement – Reading tree:** Parents are encouraged to take many photos of their children reading for enjoyment for our classroom displays.

## Writing

- **Small group, adult-led writing:** All children will sit and work with an adult at least once a week in a small group, adult-led writing experience, based on interests or an area of their provision. The adult will work closely with the children to support them / challenge them in their early writing and annotate the child's writing where necessary.
- **Helicopter stories:** The children are invited to tell a story to an adult while the adult scribes to encourage story-telling vocabulary and get a real sense of the purpose of writing. Throughout the year as the children become more confident with writing, the adults will use their knowledge of each individual child to encourage them to take part in more and more of the writing.
- **Child-initiated writing within the provision:** These will be linked to interests children have shown, and will be placed into the provision to enhance it and provide challenge. Children will be shown how to use these either through modelling from an adult within the provision or during a whole-class shared writing experience.
- **Writing area:** This will be well stocked with challenging and inviting resources such as pencils, pens, bookmaking, envelopes, notebooks etc. This will be regularly audited by staff to ensure it remains relevant and stimulating.
- **Writing books:** Adult-initiated writing, child-initiated writing and helicopter stories will be annotated where possible with the children's writing interpreted and filed in their writing books.
- **Handwriting:** Each morning the children take part in a physical session such as yoga to strengthen their muscles and follow the 'pinch and flick' rule when picking up and holding their pencil. Letter formation is taught and revisited during phonics sessions.



## **Maths**

- **Number time:** The children will have 5x 25 minute number time sessions each week. Number time will mostly consist of number aspects, however some Shape, Space and Measure is taught during this time.
- **Maths within the provision:** All areas of the provision will be carefully planned to ensure there is an aspect of Maths that the children can be challenged in. For example, having collections of small objects available to count in the mud kitchen, or having the opportunity to measure and make their own dough in the playdough area. The adults will challenge the children in both their Shape, Space and Measure vocabulary and their early number skills.

## **Focus Children**

Each week there will be four focus children from each class and all members of staff will know who the children are and their individualised next steps. This ensures that each child has a chance to work closely with the adults during their play, and will happen at least 3 times a year. There are extra weeks available for children who may need extra support.

During the week prior to the child's focus week, the parents will receive a letter asking about the child's current interests, family events etc. as well as anything they are concerned about or would like to find out about their child. This then allows the adults to cater the learning around the children's specific interests through the provision as well as through the shared writing and maths experiences. The focus children will also go on a visit to the local shop and park during their focus week.

Working this way will ensure that no children are left behind and the adults gain a good relationship with every child in the setting, as well as ensuring a greater teacher knowledge of every child for assessment purposes.

## **Assessment and evidence**

- **Tapestry:** Wow moments and children's Focus Week observations will all be uploaded to Tapestry for the children and their families to see. Parents are invited to comment and like the children's school observations, as well as upload their own from home.
- **Writing books:** All evidence of children's writing will be found in their writing books – annotated if the child is able to say what they have written.
- **Learning journeys:** Children are invited to stick any of their child-initiated work into their learning journeys to keep safe throughout the year.
- **Baseline:** The children carry out the NFER government pilot baseline when entering school, and all children will be assessed by teacher judgement by October half term and uploaded to 'Insight'.
- **Assessments throughout the year:** The children will be assessed again at Autumn 2, Spring 1, Spring 2 and then finally for their Early Years Profile during the Summer Term. These will all be teacher judgements inputted onto insight in the same format. Teacher judgements will consist mainly of teacher



knowledge of each individual children, as well as evidence such as tapestry, writing books, learning journeys, reading records and Focus week observations.

- **Moderation:** Judgements will also be moderated within the team as well as with subject leaders.

### **Learning in Foundation Stage at Brambleside**

- **Adult-led learning:** This happens as a whole class and in small groups. During this time adults have planned outcomes and activities for the children to take part in.
- **Child-initiated learning – ‘Play to Learn’:** During child-initiated learning time, the adult's role is to follow the child's lead and interests and carry out spontaneous teaching. The aim is that at least one adult is free to support children's play in both classrooms, and two adults in the outdoor area. Adults do not plan individual objectives for children or provision at this time but use their knowledge of children and their developmental next steps to extend their learning. This is done by being alert to what individual children are doing or saying, (observing), considering what this tells them about what the child knows, thinks, can do or is interested in (assessing) deciding how best they can impact on the child's learning or development in that moment (planning) and responding by using the appropriate strategy e.g. modelling, explaining, wondering, suggesting, recalling, helping (teaching).
- **Example:** Adult joins children in construction area, finds out they are making rockets. WONDERS if they would like to make a huge rocket. SUGGESTS they draw a plan first so they can work out what they need. Children do this and write that they need 3 boxes. Adult EXPLAINS that office have had delivery of boxes and SUGGESTS that children write to office to ask if they can have them. Children do so. Adult SUPPORTS children to orally segment words to hear phonemes as they write.
- **Focus children:** The adults will also have a closer eye on the ‘Focus Children’ each week, and will have each of these children's individual targets available at all times to ensure they understand how to challenge them.
- **Allowing children time to take the lead:** It is important that adults do not hijack children's play or ask too many questions - this can interrupt their thinking and lead some children to avoid adult interaction.
- **Continuous provision – ‘Play to Learn’:** In child-initiated learning, children will be accessing the continuous provision, some of which may have been enhanced for particular interests, some of which will be resources available all year round.

### **Environment**

- **Workshop style environment:** This type of environment is carefully planned by staff to ensure children have access to many different resources, indoors and outdoors, and whatever they choose they can be challenged in all areas of our curriculum. . The principle is that resources are accessible to the children,



and that they are varied, open ended and of high quality. There is an expectation that the environment is maintained and resourced to a high standard and provides stimulation and challenge. The indoor and outdoor areas are always open during the playing to learn sessions and the children have the choice of where they would like to play.

- **Adult's role:** The adults will have ownership for an area for a week. They will be in charge of ensuring areas are stocked and enhanced as well as deciding whether or not the children are deeply involved during their time at that area. They will also need to make sure that any enhancements are modelled so the children understand how to use the resources.
- **Ensuring children access every area:** To ensure every child has accessed every area throughout the week, the children are grouped and given a different area to start their play in each day.
- **Developing the provision:** Each half term, the EYFS team come together to discuss which areas need developing, and each member of staff takes responsibility of one area. Key questions during this are: 'What do we want children to get better at here?', 'What new challenge opportunity can we add here?', 'What resources will be provided to support that?', 'How will we model the use of the new resources?' The staff will have a deadline to complete the area, and then have a chance to show case their area to the team and discuss it.
- **Enhancements:** Occasionally we will enhance an area of provision in order to encourage children to engage with it in a particular way or to support a skill being taught. Unless we have specified, children do not have to use these resources in this way.

### Interventions

- **Interventions within play:** Members of staff will have certain children to target with individualised next steps. These aim to be completed within the provision, with the adult seeking out the child in their play to then carry out the intervention. This will enable the children to develop the skills they need within their familiar learning environment and provide them with the modelling and opportunities to consolidate on a daily basis
- **Quality first teaching:** Following settling in and the baseline assessments, teachers will plan learning according to the abilities, learning styles and interests of ALL children in the cohort. Where possible, adjustments and additional provision will be provided throughout the environment and during all learning opportunities to encourage a fully inclusive and stimulating experience for everyone.

### Home Learning

- **Reading Records** –Parents are expected to read with their children and practise their sound bags daily, and record this in their reading diary.



- **Phonics and Tricky Words:** Children are sent home with a 'sound bag' that includes all of the sounds and tricky words the children have learnt. These are practised at school during a child's reading session as well as at home.
- **Texts** – Parents are sent texts for any important information.
- **Workshops / information evenings:** These are held throughout the year to ensure parents are confident with the teaching and practising of children's reading and writing.
- **Homework books:** Children are sent home with one piece of homework per week. The homework will be something to do with the learning that week, but is open ended so the parents and children can access it how they like.
- **Focus meetings:** After a child's focus week, the parents are invited in after school to discuss the observations and share next steps, with ideas given on how parents can develop this at home.

### **Timetable and Planning**

- **Lesson plans:** Phonics, Literacy, Rhyme Time, Story Time, RE, PSHE and Number time sessions are planned the week before and discussed as a whole team as to which aspects the children understood and which aspects the children need more work on. All this is carried out while taking into account the Early Learning Goals that the children should achieve by the end of the year.
- **Timetable:** The weekly timetable will evolve through the year as regular weekly commitments are introduced such as PE, Forest School, assemblies etc. Daily phonics, number time, literacy sessions, reading sessions and helicopter sessions are planned into the timetable. Children attend a Forest School session once every 4 weeks with a Forest School Leader in groups of 15 children.
- **'Playing to learn':** The rest of the timetable is saved to ensure the children have large amounts of time to ensure deep levels of engagement within the continuous provision. This is our 'playing to learn' timetabled session and happens twice a day, 5x a week.