

THOSE MOST IMPORTANT 'EARLY YEARS' AT GULVAL SCHOOL

INTENT

Vision

At Gulval School, we believe that the Early Years Foundation Stage is crucial in securing solid foundations that children are going to continue to build upon. It is our intent that the children who enter our EYFS develop physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally whilst embedding a positive attitude to learning. We believe that all children deserve to be valued as an individual and we are passionate in allowing all children to achieve their full, unique potential. We are proactive in our work to involve parents in their child's learning journey so that we may work in collaboration to develop confidence, self-regulation and emotional wellbeing.

Curriculum overview

The curriculum in Early Years is designed to provide a broad and balanced education that meets the needs of all pupils and promotes a love for learning. It helps them to gain the specific skills, knowledge and understanding at the very start of their educational journey, supporting them to progress from their individual starting points. We design topics in the seven areas of learning of the Early Years curriculum framework that excite and engage, building on the interests of pupils, and developing their experiences of the world around them. We aim to ensure that our learning environments, both inside and outside are always stimulating and exciting and that, importantly, they are accessible to all children, regardless of where they are on their individual learning journey.

IMPLEMENTATION

Transition into Reception

Transition to EYFS at Gulval starts at the very first opportunity, early in the Spring term. We believe that developing positive relationships with both children and adults is the key to a smooth transition, ensuring that parents are active participants in this. During the summer term the children are invited for weekly stay and play sessions. Initially we welcome the parents to stay with their children, however towards the end we encourage parents to drop off their child to increase their independence. We host a welcome meeting for parents in the summer term to provide them with all the information they need for their new adventure ahead. Early in September, we take the time to carry out quality home visits to enable us to develop a relationship and build trust in a more relaxed environment. After completing these visits, we begin with a phased entry timetable to ensure that we can meet the needs of each individual child. Once the children become more settled, we have parent



consultation sessions to outline any key messages and priorities to our parents as well as sharing how they can begin to support their child at home.

Involvement of parents

To build on the positive relationships with parents we have a variety of strategies based on priorities identified in the school improvement plan. We host Phonics workshops in the Autumn term to ensure parents are confident in supporting their child at home with early reading skills. In addition to this, we actively recruit parents in to become reading volunteers in school, encouraging even more of our children to develop a love for reading. Throughout the year, parents are consistently involved in their child's learning journey through Tapestry. We regularly update parents on their child's successes and highlight where their child is on their learning journey, information is linked directly to the areas of learning. In the Summer term we share a report with parents which covers attainment and progress across the 17 Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of effective learning.

Baseline arrangements

In 2019 Gulval School took part in the government 'pilot' baseline. This baseline was completed within the first three weeks and it was immediately used to inform planning to ensure we are meeting the needs of all children. A range of approaches were used to gather accurate data to provide broad and triangulated baseline assessment. These included:

- child-led observations through play
- adult-led activities
- home visit information
- nursery data and handover conversations
- deprivation analysis
- analysis of cohort

The importance of accurate baseline information isn't underestimated. Data is quality assured firstly in school and then across the trust to ensure it is accurate and consistent.

Approaches to develop early reading skills

At Gulval school we teach early reading through the use of Read Write Inc (RWI) Phonics. All RWI teachers are highly trained and meet monthly as part of a training and support package to ensure a consistently strong approach. All children are assessed at least half termly to ensure that they are in the correct phonics group for their stage or development.

In addition to quality RWI teaching, both inside and outside provision is set up to include opportunities for children to use their Phonics skills independently. We recognise the importance of exposing children to a rich range of language and strive to share 5 quality texts a day (including nursery rhymes). Topics are planned carefully to meet the needs of all children and provide opportunities to expose children to new vocabulary.



Approaches to building on early mathematical skills

At Gulval we follow the sequence of White Rose maths, where we have prioritised place value and counting. The progression of core skills is broken down into small steps to ensure adults can unpick children's understanding and to enable them to move forward with their learning. Mastery approaches are interlinked within our direct teaching to promote problem solving and reasoning skills. After key skills are taught as a whole class, children are given opportunities to practise the skills taught alongside their peers.

Approaches to all other EYFS teaching

Continuous provision is planned for each area of the classroom to inspire and engage young learners. Rainbow challenges are planned to encourage children to explore a variety of areas in the classroom. In addition to this, topics are carefully planned to cover the broad range of learning, ensuring all areas of the EYFS are being covered.

IMPACT

Transition to Reception Class is meticulously planned and is a real strength. We build on prior learning and use our close links with our nursery settings to quickly establish positive relationships from day one. Home visits are popular with parents and this enhanced our baseline data collection. Broad and accurate data was collected to support the baseline assessments giving an accurate representation of each child's starting points. Quality observations show that children are engaged, inspired and are becoming able to challenge themselves within their learning. Regular ongoing assessment of Phonics evidence that children are making good progress. Those children who have been identified to "catch up quick" are making above the expected level of progress. All children are developing fantastic early number skills using White Rose, which is encouraging children to explain their ideas through problem solving and reasoning. Monitoring has shown that teaching within EYFS is at least consistently good overtime and the EYFS team are working together to ensure a consistent approach is being followed.

Table 1: EYFS Data Overview

	% Achieving Good Level of Development	
	National	School
2017	71	79
2018	72	92
2019	72	92
2020 (target)		86

