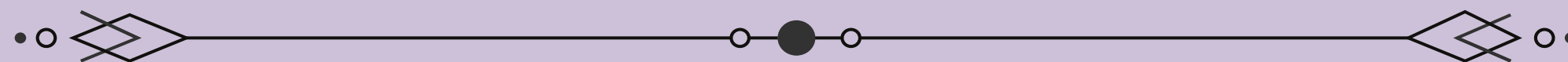




**DORMERS WELLS
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

EARLY YEARS HANDBOOK



Dormers Wells Primary School

~

Early Years Lead: Tara Pierrepont

Welcome

Welcome to Dormers Wells Primary School, part of the Dormers Wells Learning Trust.

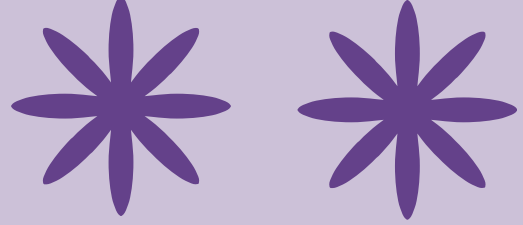
At Dormers Wells Primary, children are at the heart of everything we do. We are committed to providing a nurturing, inclusive and ambitious environment where every child is known, valued and supported to thrive. We believe that children who feel safe, happy and confident are best placed to Believe, Aspire, Flourish.

We recognise that the Early Years Foundation Stage provides the foundation for future learning and success. Our curriculum is carefully designed to inspire curiosity, promote independence and ensure that every child makes strong progress from their individual starting points.

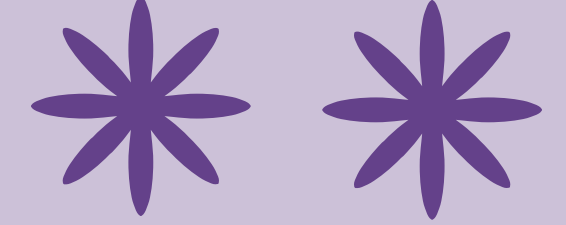
This handbook outlines our vision, values and expectations for Early Years practice. We hope it provides a clear guide to our shared commitment to delivering high-quality provision and the very best outcomes for every child.



Believe Aspire Flourish



OUR INTENT



At DWPS, we are committed to providing each child with the best possible start to their learning journey. Our ambitious and inclusive curriculum is designed to ensure that all children, regardless of their background, starting point or individual needs, have the opportunity to achieve and succeed. We have high expectations for every child, underpinned by strong, nurturing relationships that enable children to feel safe, valued and confident to learn.

We recognise that communication is fundamental to children's success. Through high-quality interactions, rich language experiences and purposeful play, we develop confident, articulate communicators who can express their ideas, build relationships and engage successfully with the world around them.

Children are engaged, curious and motivated learners who demonstrate resilience, independence and a love of learning.

We are committed to ensuring that all children, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, receive the support and challenge they need to make strong progress and achieve their full potential.

Our children learn to cooperate, show kindness and respect, and develop the confidence to become active, responsible members of our school community.



THE EYFS FRAMEWORK

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory framework that sets the standards for learning, development, and care for children from birth to age 5. It establishes the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which define the expected level of development by the end of Reception, and outlines the principles that underpin all early years practice.

The EYFS identifies seven areas of learning: three Prime Areas — Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Physical Development — and four Specific Areas — Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design. All areas are delivered through play, exploration, and positive relationships.





Early Years Foundation Stage

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

developing a positive sense of self, building relationships and respect.

Understanding the World

exploring and observing the world, finding out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Communication and language developing confidence and skills to express ourselves. Speaking and listening in a range of situations.

Literacy

developing phonic knowledge and apply this in both reading and writing. Developing a love of stories and reading,

Expressive Arts and Design

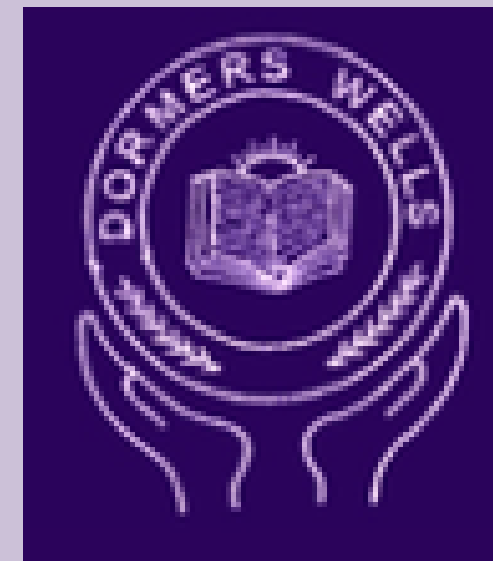
exploring and playing with a range of materials, as well as developing creativity and imagination.

Physical Development

developing gross and fine motor skills as well as an understanding healthy lifestyles.

Maths

opportunities to develop mathematical knowledge and skills including number, counting and shapes, spaces and measures.



THE FOUR PRINCIPLES OF THE EYFS

01

A Unique Child

Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

02

Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through warm, loving, and responsive relationships.



03

Enabling Environments

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments that reflect their needs and interests. They achieve the best when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;

04

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities



CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING

The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe how children learn, rather than what they learn. They are fundamental to children's development and underpin all areas of the Early Years curriculum.

Playing and Exploring

Children investigate, explore, have a go and learn through first-hand experiences. They show curiosity, make choices and are willing to try new things.

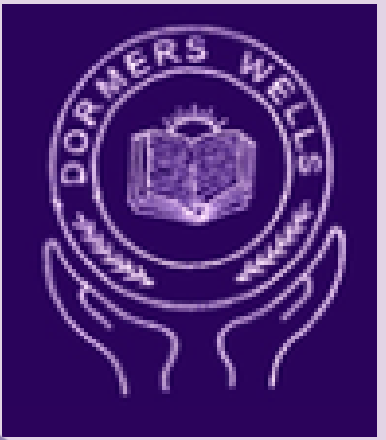
Active Learning

Children are motivated to learn, concentrate on tasks and persevere when they encounter challenges. They take pride in their achievements and enjoy meeting goals.

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children develop their own ideas, solve problems, make connections between experiences and think creatively. They plan, review and adapt their approaches to learning.

Together, these characteristics support children to become curious, resilient, independent and reflective learners, equipping them with the skills and attitudes needed for lifelong learning and future success.



PLAY IN ALL ITS FORMS

We recognise play as the foundation of children's learning and development. High-quality play provides opportunities for children to explore, investigate, solve problems, develop language and make sense of the world around them. Through play, children build confidence, resilience, creativity and independence while developing the knowledge and skills that underpin future learning.

We believe that meaningful learning is enhanced through high-quality adult interactions. Our practitioners prioritise spending time alongside children in their play, carefully observing, listening and responding to children's interests and ideas. By modelling language, asking thoughtful questions, extending thinking and introducing new vocabulary, adults enrich children's learning and deepen their understanding.

These warm, responsive interactions build strong relationships, foster a love of learning and ensure that every child is supported and challenged to achieve their full potential.

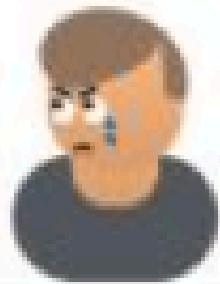


The Leuven Scale for Well-being (in learning)

It's time for an honest observation of your students

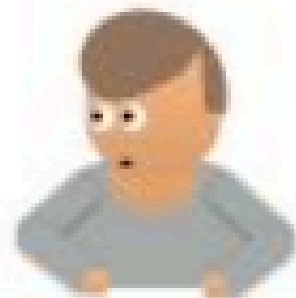
Based on: <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/documents-18306618/leuven.pdf>

Let's hope teachers are designing and evaluating classroom activities with an aim that every learner might reach a state of **flow**.



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.



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.



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.



High

The child shows obvious signs of satisfaction (as listed under level 5). However, these signals are not constantly present with the same intensity.



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, sing.

The child appears relaxed. The child expresses self-confidence and self-assurance.

By Richard Wells
Twitter: @iPadWells
iPads4schools.org

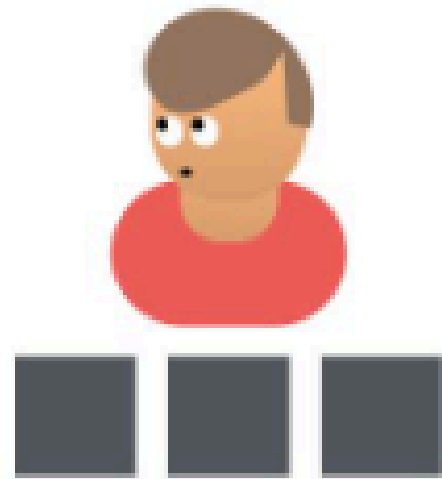
Children's levels of involvement are regularly assessed using the Leuven Scale to evaluate the quality of our provision. This enables us to reflect on and adapt our practice to maximise children's engagement, wellbeing and progress.

The Leuven Scale for Involvement (in learning)

It's time for an honest observation of your students

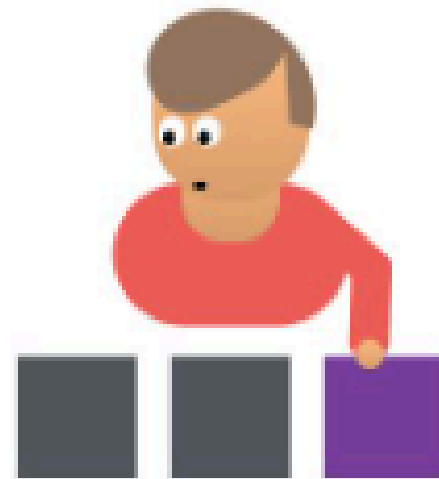
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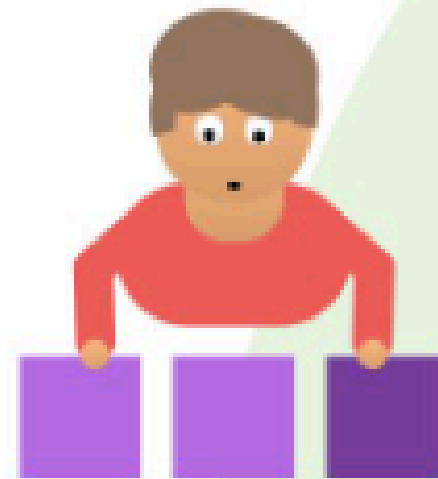
Extremely low

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.



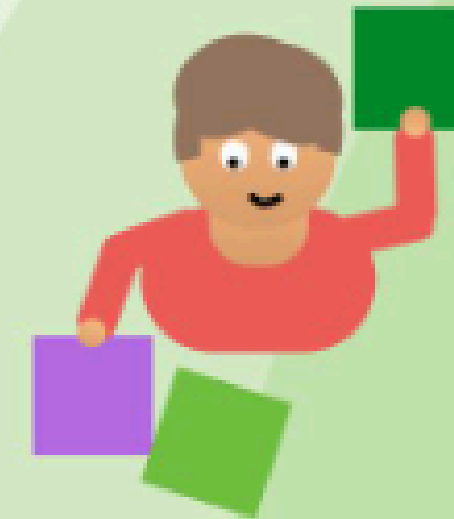
Low

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.



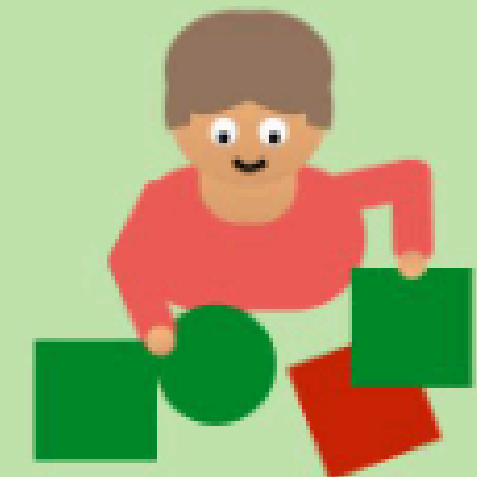
Moderate

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 and concentration and **can be easily distracted**.



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**.



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.

Look out for: focused concentration on the present moment; loss of self-consciousness; activity that's intrinsically rewarding; Distorted awareness of time; personal agency.

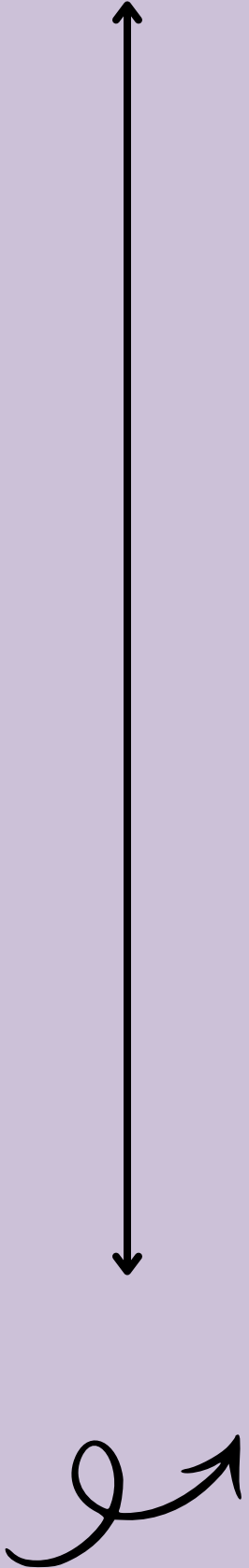


TRIPS AND ENRICHMENT

We believe that rich first-hand experiences are essential to children's learning and development. Each half term, children take part in a carefully planned programme of educational visits and enrichment activities that enhance our curriculum and bring learning to life. Whether exploring the local community, visiting places of interest, welcoming visitors into school or participating in themed experiences, these opportunities broaden children's knowledge, develop their understanding of the world and inspire curiosity. Enrichment experiences provide meaningful contexts for learning, promote communication and language, build confidence and independence, and create lasting memories that children can draw upon in their play, conversations and future learning.

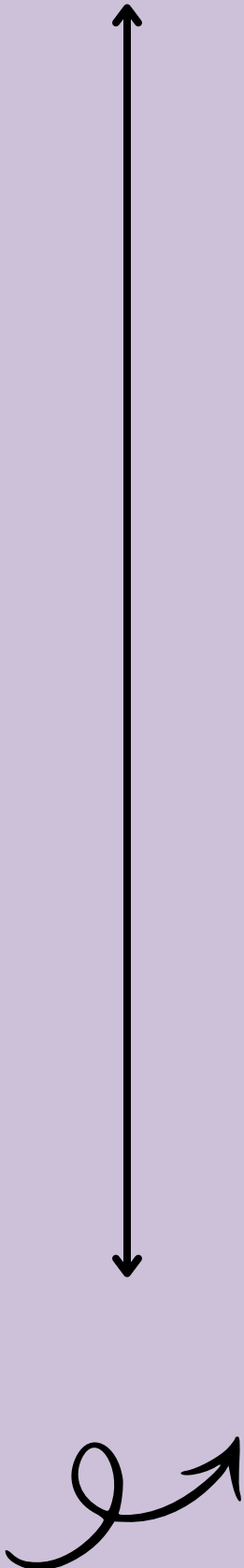
NURSERY CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

	NURSERY	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
CURRICULUM MAP 2026-2027	Focus text / themes	Me and my friends Settling Getting to know you Little Rabbit Foo Foo	Me and my friends Diwali My mum and dad make me laugh Sticks and stones	Shape, Colour and Pattern Pete the cat – shoes Pete the cat – buttons Chinese New Year Cinnamon and clove	Food Kitchen Disco Supertato Mr Potato Head	Animals Ramadan and Eid We all went on safari. The tiger who came to tea	Animals Bumble Bear The very hungry cat Ant and the ant
	Communication and Language	Listening to others in small groups and responding to simple questions.	Using talk to connect, predict, recall and relive experiences.	Beginning to use more complex sentences to link thoughts and ideas.	Joining in with rhymes and rhythms	Recalling stories and joining in with repeated refrains.	Asking and responding to simple questions.
	PSED	Setting routines, class rules, forming relationships.	Gaining independence and confidence.	Cooperation and sharing	Caring for others	Identifying needs and feelings for others	Transition to Reception.
	Physical Development	Independent toileting needs- washing hands Stretching	Negotiating space confidently	Gross and fine motor skill development.	Developing different types of movement and coordination	Moving freely and confidently in a range of ways.	Recognising danger and taking some safety measures.
	Reading	Enjoying and joining in with stories and rhymes.	Independently handling books.	Describing story events, characters and settings.	Rhythm, rhyme and alliteration.	Joining in with stories. Understanding stories have a beginning, middle and end	Oral blending
	Writing	Distinguishing between marks.	Ascribing meaning to marks in environment.	Giving meaning to mark making		Making recognisable representations in our drawing	Hearing initial sounds in words, representing them in writing
	Mathematics (White Rose)	Number rhymes and songs	Applying their knowledge of number to objects and marks on paper.	Introducing and investigating numerals		Grouping objects in different ways	Problem solving
		Everyday language relating to time.	Comparing and sorting objects.	Introduce positional language	Shape and pattern	Measure – Capacity / weight	Measure - length
	Understanding of the World	Significant events in own life	Special times and celebrations for family and friends	Exploring simple technology	Exploring growth and changes	Observations of objects / animals found in the environment	Exploring the local area
	Expressive Art and Design	Singing familiar songs. exploring musical instruments.	Using shapes and construction toys to explore materials and express ideas.	Exploring and recreating colour and pattern	Using toys or objects to tell a story	Animal role play – using movement and sound to express ideas and experiences.	Selecting and using tools for a purpose with safety.
	Computing	Beginning to operate simple equipment, making toys work by pressing parts or lifting flaps to achieve different effects.		Interacting with technological toys with knobs or pulleys, using real objects such as cameras or mobile phones.		Knowing and learning that information can be retrieved from computers.	
	Music	Experiencing music - singing nursery rhymes.	Sounds around us – environmental sounds	Sounds around us – instrumental sounds	Move our bodies to music	Body percussion, rhythms and rhyme.	
	Trips & Visitors	Storytellers (other adults) sharing different books from different cultures.	Diwali party Christmas party	Pete the cat walk Chinese new year cooking	Fruit salad making. Easter nest cake cooking.	Local park visit Tiger’s tea party	Go on a minibeast hunt Butterfly life cycle



RECEPTION CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

	RECEPTION	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
CURRICULUM MAP 2026-2027	Global theme	Change Makers Base on class names and House groups.		Caring for the Environment Caring for our school environment		Community Family	
	Communication and Language	Taking turns to speak and listen and follow	Participating in discussions	Asking relevant questions.	Expressing and explaining thoughts	Showing awareness of the listener.	Using correct tenses when speaking in full
	PSED	New routines and forming relationships	Self-help skills	Healthy living	Taking turns and sharing	Self confidence	Transition
	Physical Development	Experimenting with movement	Using a variety of tools	Letter formation	Balancing and using climbing equipment	Ball skills	Obstacle course and sports day.
	Physical Education	Coordination, Balance and Spatial awareness	Dance	Throwing & Catching	Spatial Awareness & Teamwork	Shapes & Sequencing	Running, Throwing & Jumping
	Core texts	The Kissing Hand We're going on a bear hunt The Gruffalo	Rama and Sita (Diwali) Owl Babies Christmas Story	Dirty Bertie The Snail and the Whale Look up Rainbow fish	Aliens Love Underpants Beegu Whatever Next	Superworm The bad tempered Ladybug The secret sky garden	Home This is Our Home Sprinderella
	Reading	Listening and responding to stories.	Talking about stories, characters and settings. Blending sounds to read	Blending sounds to read simple words	Blending sounds to read captions.	Reading simple sentences	Reading with increasing fluency and
	Writing	Name writing	Hearing, saying and writing the initial	Segmenting to write simple words	Segmenting to write captions	Writing sentences	Using capital letters, finger spaces and full
	Mathematics (White Rose / NCETM)	Match, sort and compare Talk about measure and patterns	Circles and triangles 1,2,3,4,5 Shapes with 4 sides	Alive in 5 Mass and capacity Growing 6.7.8	Length, height and time Building 9 and 10 Explore 3D shapes.	To 20 and beyond How many now? Manipulate, compare and	Sharing and grouping Visualise, build and map Make connections
	Understanding of the World	Special times which times and people are	Cultural communities- where do we belong?	Showing interest in different occupations and ways of life.	Materials- investigating Festive times-which are	Observations of animals Special stories-which are	Local environment Our special world-what is
		Forest school link: Exploring changes in the natural world. (Seasonal Changes)		Forest school link: Observations about plants and caring for our environment.		Forest school link: Observations about mini beasts and insects and where they live	
	Computing	Being aware of and operating technology at home and school.		Completing a simple program		Selecting and using technology for a particular purpose	
	Expressive Art and Design	Learning songs	Exploring different tools and techniques.	Creating own songs and dances	Junk modelling and exploring narratives	Sharing and explaining creations and the	Performance skills
		Singing nursery rhymes and action	Singing songs and improvising.	Singing and creating sounds (non	Playing classroom instruments for a	Exploring pitch in songs with the voice.	Exploring pitch with their own voices and
	Trips & visitors	Workshop for Bear hunt	Local visit to the post box	Rainbow Fish theatre workshop	Local visit to the library	Perivale Wood – superworm and friends	Soft play experience / traffic walk



KEY FEATURES OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE



The following key features of effective practice are threaded through our practice and form the foundations of our ethos.

The best for every child

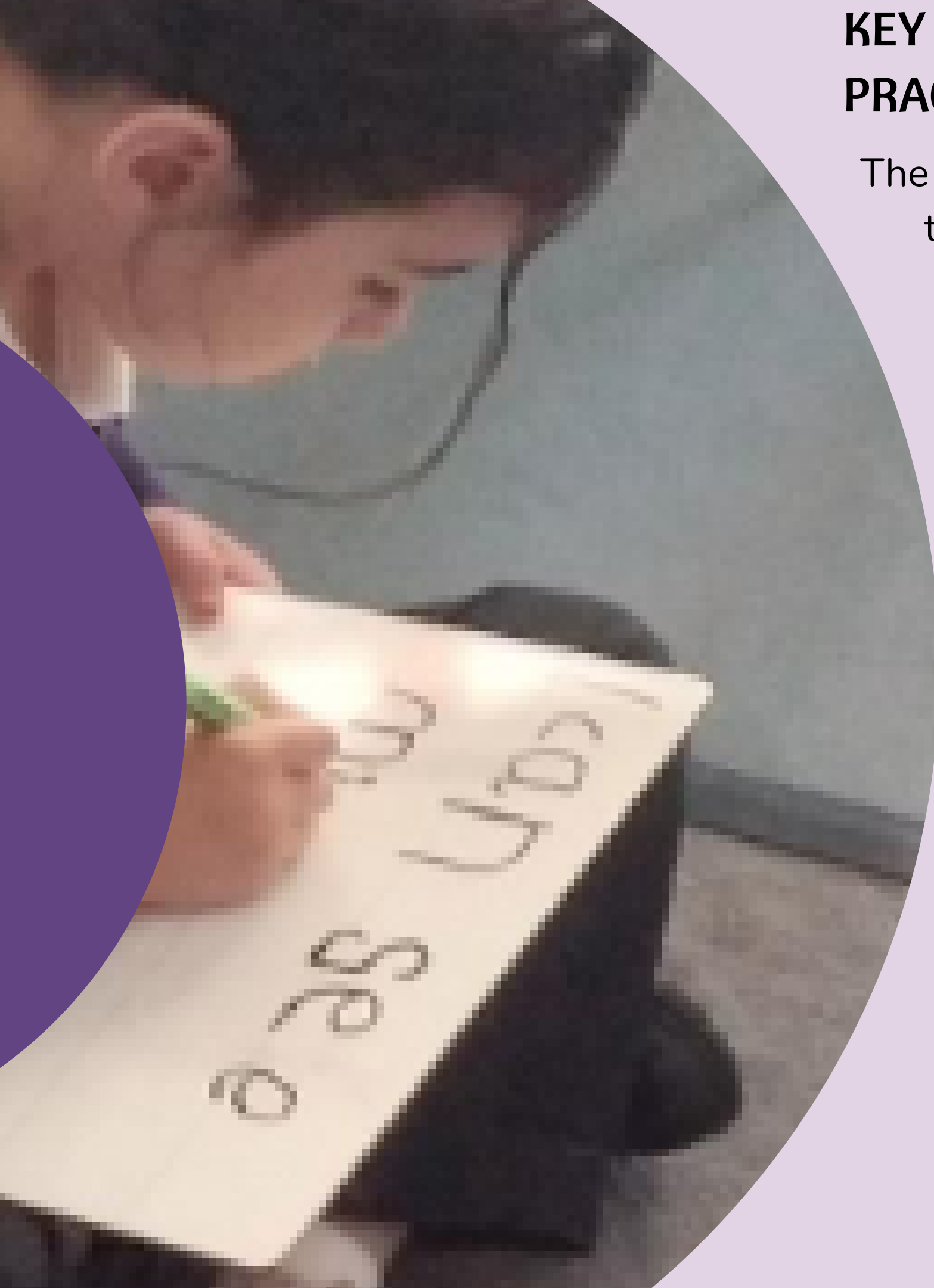
Every child is given an equal opportunity to succeed. Our inclusive curriculum and carefully designed learning environment ensure all children can access high-quality learning and thrive. Through high-quality adult interactions and an adaptive approach that responds to children's individual needs and interests, we ensure every child is supported and challenged to make strong progress from their starting points.

The curriculum

Our ambitious curriculum is carefully planned and sequenced to build on children's prior knowledge and skills, providing secure foundations for future learning. It is shaped by children's needs and interests to ensure learning is engaging, meaningful and purposeful. A strong emphasis on language and communication enables children to become confident, articulate communicators. Children leave the Early Years with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for a successful transition and readiness for Key Stage 1.

Assessment

Assessment is used effectively in a range of forms to accurately identify where children are in their learning and to inform their next steps. Adults build strong, nurturing relationships and know each child as a unique individual. This knowledge is used to create a bespoke learning environment that meets children's needs and enables them to make rapid progress. Any additional needs are identified early, with timely support and interventions put in place to ensure all children achieve their potential.





KEY FEATURES OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE CONTINUED



Developing resilient, independent learners

We place a strong emphasis on developing children's self-regulation and executive function. Children are supported to sustain attention, concentrate on their learning and develop the working and long-term memory needed to build and retain knowledge over time. Through high-quality interactions and carefully chosen language, adults help children to plan, monitor and reflect on their learning, enabling them to become increasingly independent, resilient and successful learners.

Parents as partners

We recognise the vital role that positive partnerships with parents and carers play in children's learning and achievement. We operate an open-door policy, with staff available at the beginning and end of each school day, as well as through the ClassDojo app. Parents are kept well informed about the curriculum and their child's progress and are actively involved in school life through open sessions, workshops and shared learning opportunities. By working together, we create a strong partnership that supports every child to thrive.

Opportunities to deepen learning

We provide children with every opportunity to practise and apply new skills while deepening their understanding of key knowledge. Our carefully planned learning environment reflects current learning, with high-quality resources that encourage children to revisit, embed and extend their understanding through purposeful play. Home learning provides further opportunities for children and their families to reinforce and consolidate new knowledge, strengthening learning through meaningful repetition and practice.

BASELINE, PROGRESS TRACKING & REPORTING

01

Reception Baseline Assessment

A statutory assessment completed in the first six weeks of Reception to capture each child's starting points in literacy, communication, and maths.

02

Tracking and Identifying Gaps

Ongoing, child-centred observations inform planning and help staff identify developmental gaps early, ensuring timely support for every child. Termly form summative assessment to track progress against individual starting points.

03

Family Conversations and Meetings

Regular informal updates and scheduled parent meetings keep families informed and involved in their child's learning journey throughout the year.



04

Written Reports

A formal written report is shared with families at the end of the year, summarising progress across all seven areas of learning, characteristics of effective learning and identifying next steps.

05

Moderation

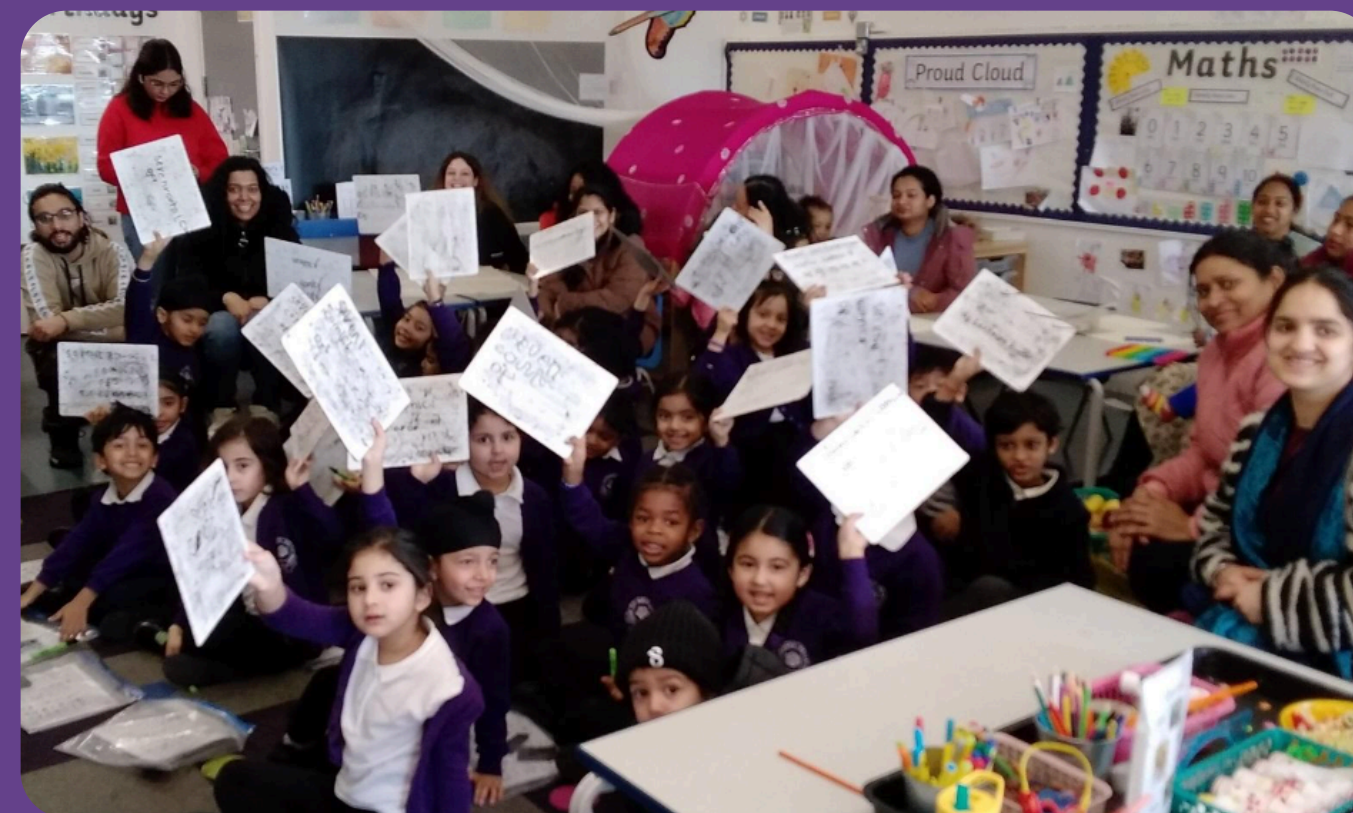
Regular moderation ensures that assessment judgements are accurate, consistent and reliable. Staff engage in both internal and external moderation opportunities to maintain high standards and shared expectations. Ongoing professional development, including moderation training, ensures staff remain up to date with current EYFS guidance and best practice.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

We build strong, trusting relationships with our families, firmly believing that we are one big Dormers Wells family. Our open-door policy encourages open and effective communication, ensuring parents and carers feel welcomed, valued and supported. We celebrate the diversity of our community and, where possible, communicate in families' home languages, making effective use of the translation features within ClassDojo. We actively encourage parents and carers to engage in their children's learning through regular shared learning opportunities, workshops and school events, recognising that strong home-school partnerships have a positive impact on children's achievement and wellbeing.

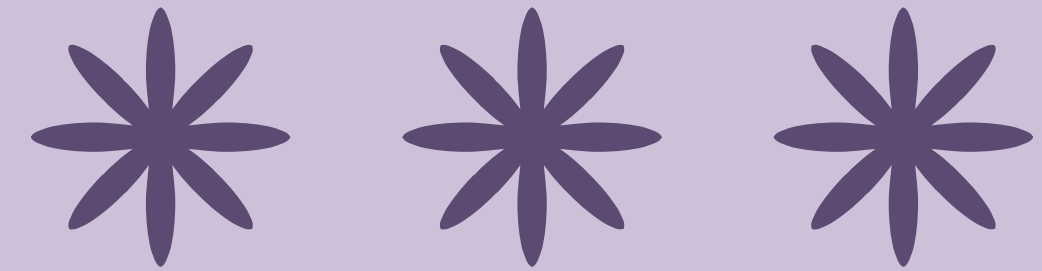
Examples of opportunities for our parents to engage with their child's experiences at DWPS:

- curriculum based open sessions.
- curriculum based parent workshops.
- online safety and parenting workshops.
- regularly updates on learning via ClassDojo.
- volunteering opportunities for trips and enrichment.
- Winter and Summer fairs.



EACH DAY DIFFERENT, EVERYDAY NEW

Each day provides new opportunities for learning and discovery. Children experience a carefully balanced day that combines adult-led, adult-initiated and child-initiated learning opportunities. Throughout Nursery and Reception, children engage in high-quality teaching through small and large group sessions, alongside purposeful play experiences where adults actively interact, extend thinking and follow children's interests. This approach ensures children are supported, challenged and able to develop their knowledge, skills and independence.

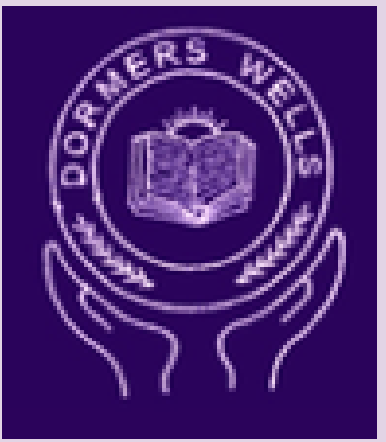


EXAMPLE NURSERY DAILY TIMETABLE

		8.40-11.40				
	8.40-8.55	8.40-10.00 9am – open outside (once register is completed on Arbor)	10.00-10.45 (Snack table open 10.00 -10.30)	10.45-11.00	11.00-11.30	11.30-11.40
Monday	Doors open – children self-register and begin playing inside	Free flow learning opportunities inside and outside/ Adult directed activities.	Running snack table (children are encouraged to join, one adult MUST be sitting with them) Free flow play continues	Tidy up time	Group Time (including phonics and maths input)	Home things and goodbye song
Tuesday		Free flow learning opportunities inside and outside/ Adult directed activities.	Running snack table (children are encouraged to join, one adult MUST be sitting with them) Free flow play continues	Tidy up time	Group Time (including phonics and maths input)	Home things and goodbye song
Wednesday		Free flow learning opportunities inside and outside/ Adult directed activities.	Running snack table (children are encouraged to join, one adult MUST be sitting with them) Free flow play continues	Tidy up time	Group Time (including phonics and maths input)	Home things and goodbye song
Thursday		Free flow learning opportunities inside and outside/ Adult directed activities.	Running snack table (children are encouraged to join, one adult MUST be sitting with them) Free flow play continues	Tidy up time	Group Time (including phonics and maths input)	Home things and goodbye song
Friday		Free flow learning opportunities inside and outside/ Adult directed activities.	Running snack table (children are encouraged to join, one adult MUST be sitting with them) Free flow play continues	Tidy up time	Group Time (including phonics and maths input)	Home things and goodbye song

EXAMPLE RECEPTION DAILY TIMETABLE

	8:40-9:00	9:00-9:30	9:40-9:50	9:50-10:05	10:05-10:15	10:15-10:25	10:25-11:30	11:30-11:45	11:45-12:45	12:45-1:00	1:00-3:00	3:00-3:15
Monday	Soft start reading	Phonics	Movement break	Reading ninjas	Literacy	Fruit / conversation opportunities	Free choice	PE	Lunch	Handwriting & Topic	Free choice	Story / singing / PSED
Tuesday	Soft start reading	Phonics	Movement break	Reading ninjas	Literacy	Fruit / conversation opportunities	Free choice	Maths	Lunch	Library	Free choice	Story / singing / PSED
Wednesday	Soft start reading	Phonics	Movement break	Reading ninjas	Literacy	Fruit / conversation opportunities	Free choice	Maths	Lunch	Handwriting & Topic	Free choice	Story / singing / PSED
Thursday	Soft start reading	Phonics	Movement break	Literacy	Fruit / conversation opportunities	Free choice		Maths	Lunch	Handwriting & Topic	Yoga group 1	Yoga group 2
Friday	Soft start reading	Phonics	Movement break	Literacy	Fruit / conversation opportunities	Free choice		Maths	Lunch	Handwriting & Topic	Free choice	Story / singing / PSED



THE ROLE OF THE ADULT IN THE EARLY YEARS

Ofsted definition of teaching

Teaching encompasses the many ways adults support children's learning through high-quality interactions, purposeful play and planned experiences. It includes modelling, explaining, questioning, encouraging, extending thinking and providing appropriate challenge. Effective teaching also involves creating enabling environments, establishing positive routines and using ongoing assessment to understand children's learning, inform next steps and support progress.

Non-negotiables

- Adults prioritise time with children.
- Language and communication come first.
- Teaching is woven into play.
- Relationships and belonging underpin everything.
- Boundaries and expectations are clear and consistent.
- Adults are responsive and reflective in their approach, treating all children as individuals.
- High expectations for all.



SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

All staff have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of every child. They complete annual safeguarding training, understand the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect, and are clear about their individual safeguarding responsibilities. Any concerns are reported immediately to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs). Information identifying the safeguarding team is clearly displayed in every classroom to ensure it is easily accessible to staff, children and visitors.

Children trust the staff at DWPS and know that they can speak to any adult if they have a concern. As a school, we have a clear 'Whistle Blowing Policy' to ensure that all concerns are reported and can be acted upon. The designated key worker for each child is their class teacher.



Our learning environment

Emotional environment



We recognise that a safe, secure and nurturing emotional environment is fundamental to children's learning and development. Children learn best when they feel happy, valued and emotionally secure. We foster trusting relationships where children feel confident to express their thoughts and feelings, knowing that caring, trusted adults are always available to provide support, reassurance and guidance when needed.

We explicitly teach children to recognise, understand and express their emotions through regular discussion and high-quality interactions. This is embedded within planned circle times and reinforced throughout daily routines, play and learning experiences, enabling children to develop the language and confidence to communicate their feelings effectively. Children are also supported to recognise and respond sensitively to the feelings of others, helping them to develop empathy, kindness and positive relationships.



Our learning environment

Indoor environment

An effective Early Years environment is purposeful, enabling and accessible to all learners. It is carefully designed to promote independence, curiosity and high levels of engagement. Adults explicitly teach children how to use the environment responsibly, modelling our 'Choose it, Use it, Put it Away' approach to develop independence and respect for shared resources.

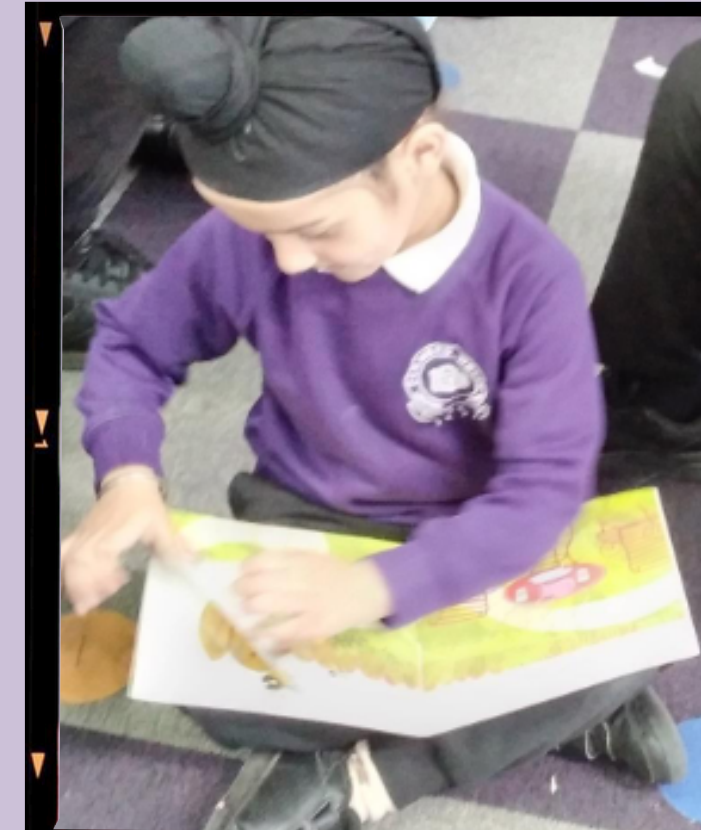
The indoor learning environment is thoughtfully organised into clearly defined areas that reflect current learning and children's interests. High-quality resources are readily accessible, encouraging children to revisit, practise and apply new knowledge and skills through purposeful play. Practitioners continually observe children's engagement and adapt the environment to meet their evolving needs, interests and stages of development.



Our learning environment

Book corners

Book areas are warm, inviting spaces that promote a love of reading. They contain a carefully selected range of high-quality texts that are regularly reviewed and refreshed to maintain children's interest without becoming overcrowded.



Our learning environment

Home corners

Every classroom includes a well-resourced home corner that reflects the diversity of our school community. As home is central to young children's experiences, this area provides meaningful opportunities to develop communication, imagination, creativity and social skills through role play. Enhancements linked to children's interests, quality texts or current learning may be added while maintaining the home corner as its core purpose.



Our learning environment

Maths areas

The mathematics area is well resourced and organised to enable children to independently explore, practise and consolidate mathematical concepts, reinforcing learning introduced through adult-led teaching.



Our learning environment

Writing opportunities

Opportunities for mark making and writing are embedded throughout the learning environment, encouraging children to apply their developing writing skills across a range of meaningful contexts.



Our learning environment

Creative area

The creative area promotes curiosity, imagination and self-expression through a wide range of freely accessible materials. Children are encouraged to make independent choices, explore different media and develop their own creative ideas through open-ended experiences.



Our learning environment



An accessible environment

Accessible, open-ended resources, such as construction materials, small-world play and loose parts, are available for children to access independently through self-selection. All areas are expected to be clearly labelled, thoughtfully organised and set up to ensure resources are visible and easily accessible to children. These opportunities encourage creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking and collaboration, while enabling children to follow their own interests. Adults use high-quality interactions to observe, support and extend learning, promoting sustained shared thinking and deeper levels of engagement.



Our learning environment

Outdoor learning

Outdoor learning is fundamental to our teaching in the Foundation Stage. Being outdoors supports children's confidence, independence and wellbeing, while developing their curiosity, creativity and skills of exploration. The nature of the outdoor environment provides opportunities for children to explore on a larger scale, encouraging teamwork, problem-solving and the development of language through meaningful interactions and shared experiences.

Our outdoor learning environment is carefully planned to enhance children's learning experiences. Provision is regularly reviewed, reflected upon and adapted to respond to children's current needs, interests and stages of development, ensuring that the environment remains engaging, purposeful and challenging.



Our learning environment

Outdoor Learning Expectations

- Outdoor learning is accessible throughout the year, regardless of the weather, parents are asked to bring weather appropriate clothing to school.
- The environment is purposeful, well-organised and accessible, enabling children to confidently self-select resources and activities and make independent choices about their learning.
- Adults use outdoor learning opportunities purposefully to engage with children, develop sustained shared thinking, model language and extend learning through meaningful interactions.
- Provision provides opportunities for children to develop physical skills, independence, collaboration, communication, problem-solving and resilience through first-hand experiences.
- Adults observe how children use the environment and adapt provision accordingly, ensuring that outdoor learning reflects and builds upon children's interests and learning needs.



A SMOOTH TRANSITION

Starting Nursery

01

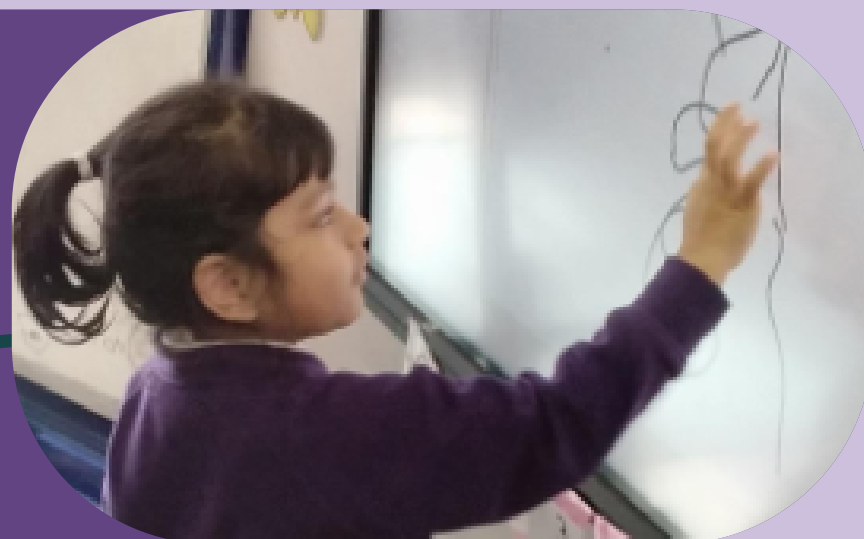
Admissions meeting

Parents and children are invited to attend our admissions meeting and receive information on their upcoming learning adventure.

02

Stay and Play session

Parents and children are invited to attend stay and play sessions as part of a small group. This is a great opportunity for us to get to know each other and for the children to explore their new environment while it is quieter.



03

Staggered starts

Children start nursery in small groups, this allows staff time to focus on settling new children and their parents.

04

Bespoke settling

We are open and flexible to make changes to the settling of individuals and will work alongside families to ensure a smooth transition.

05

Social Story

Before the summer holidays, a social story is shared with all children transitioning into nursery. It introduces their new environment, including classrooms, toilets and the playground, as well as their new adults. The story is also shared with families to support conversations and help children feel confident about the transition.

A SMOOTH TRANSITION

Nursery to Reception

01

Admissions meeting

Parents are invited to attend our admissions meeting and receive information on their upcoming learning adventure.

02

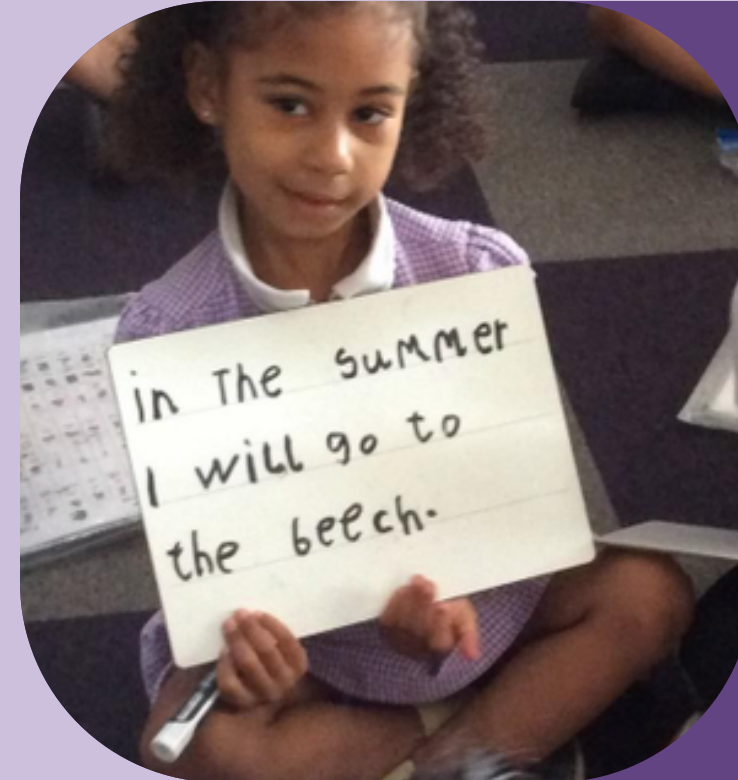
Stay and Play sessions for new starters

Children who are new to our setting are invited with their parents to attend a stay and play session, this is a great opportunity to get to know us and explore the new environment.

03

Visiting reception

Throughout the summer term, children who will be moving into reception from our nursery make regular visits to reception, giving them ample opportunity to explore the new setting.



04

Staggered starts and transition days

Children new to our setting begin their transition in a quieter environment, providing a calm and positive first experience of DWPS. Children start on half days and quickly build to full days, supporting confidence, independence and readiness for Reception, while also meeting the needs of working families.

05

Social Story

Before the summer holidays, a social story is shared with all children transitioning into reception. It introduces their new environment, including classrooms, toilets and the playground, as well as their new adults. The story is also shared with families to support conversations and help children feel confident about the transition.

A SMOOTH TRANSITION

Reception to Year 1

01

KS1 Playground

In the summer term, Reception children transition their lunchtime play to the Key Stage 1 playground. This familiarises them with their new environment and provides opportunities to build social relationships with the Year 1 children they will share the playground with the following year..

02

Assembly

In the summer term, Reception children begin to attend our daily assemblies with Key Stage 1, as well as our weekly whole school assembly.



03

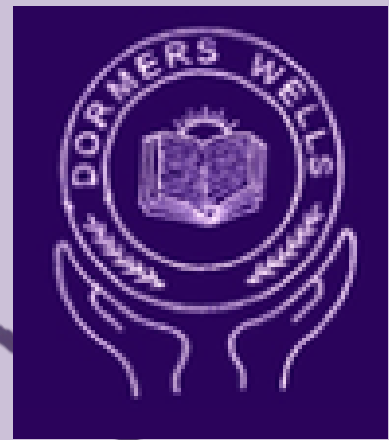
Transition visits

Throughout the summer term, children are given regular opportunities to visit year 1. We make use of the year 1 classrooms during their weekly PE sessions for activities such as story time or handwriting.

04

Social Story

Before the summer holidays, a social story is shared with all children transitioning into Year 1. It introduces their new environment, including classrooms, toilets and the playground, as well as their new adults. The story is also shared with families to support conversations and help children feel confident about the transition.



RECORDING OF LEARNING

The EYFS observation cycle

We believe first and foremost in the value of high-quality interactions within the Foundation Stage. Adults prioritise spending time with children, getting to know their individual needs, interests and strengths. This knowledge informs our planning and environment, ensuring learning and next steps are engaging, meaningful and relevant.

Class Dojo

We make effective use of ClassDojo to keep families involved in their children's learning and experiences. Adults regularly share updates and photographs of daily activities, celebrating children's achievements and providing families with a window into their learning.

Learning books

Reception children are provided with their own recording book for more structured learning experiences. As a progression from Nursery, children are ready to engage in slightly more formal learning, with literacy and maths adult-directed activities recorded in their books. This supports children to develop the skills, independence and confidence needed for the next stage of their learning.



TOILETTING AND INTIMATE CARE

We recognise that children in the Foundation Stage are still developing their independence and self-care skills. We prioritise working closely with families to support children in developing these skills, sharing consistent strategies that can be used both at home and in school.

Children are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their personal care, including managing clothing, toileting and changing independently where appropriate. In both Nursery and Reception, where appropriate, we ask families to provide spare clothing so that children can be supported to change when necessary, in line with our intimate care policy. Adults provide sensitive, respectful support while encouraging children to develop confidence, independence and ownership of their personal care.



THANK YOU

We look forward to working with you.

