

# Watlington Early Years



# Our aims

- share our ethos about learning in early years
- give you some of the rationale behind our approach
- share the key areas of the early years framework
- give you an insight into what your child will experience with us
- provide you with practical ideas use at home



# From the start ....

- Get to know you and your child
- Assess your child from their starting point
- We then plan to make sure they have an exciting and **challenging** learning experience with us
- Ongoing observations, tracking and assessments
- We will contact you if we have any specific concerns, 'no news is good news!'

## Behind the scenes....

We use:

- 'All about me' form
- Observations
- Leuvens - wellbeing
- Baseline (Reception)
- Language screening (WellComm)
- Our own initial assessments



# The Principles

## The Early Years Framework 2025

1. Unique child
2. Positive relationships
3. Enabling environments
4. Learning and development



- A new change in the **EYFS** framework - promote “good **oral health** of children”

*Public Health England that suggests that 1 in 5 children aged 5, have experienced tooth decay*

## 3 Prime Areas

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



Reading and writing  
float on a sea of talk.

-James Britton

## 'Speaking and Language skills are on the decline'

(Nursery World article,  
Building your Curriculum –  
Communication  
and Language – April 2020)

We are seeing a decline in children's home experiences of talking, singing, and learning nursery rhymes. As children's engagement in playing with phones and tablets rises, the focus on play and talking diminishes.

In 2017, Ofcom reported that nearly half of children aged 3 to 4 years, use YouTube. More than half are online for 8 hours a week.

**There is no app  
to replace your  
lap!**





# What does language rich look like?



- Correct modelling of speaking, listening, reading and writing (speech sounds)
- Don't watch and wait.... Act NOW!
- Shared experiences – day to day
- New vocabulary introduced and explained + explored
- Opportunities to talk and be listened to – language developed/ modelled
- Range of texts to develop language – from different cultures, magazines, newspapers, non-fiction as well as fiction. New and different authors. Library visits
- Rhymes, nursery rhymes and songs

# Let's Talk

I agree  
with you because ...

This  
reminds  
me of...

What  
I heard you  
say was...

I learned  
that ...

Could you please  
tell me  
more  
about...

I'm  
surprised  
that...

I noticed  
that...

According  
to the text...

Could you  
explain your  
answer?

This  
makes me  
wonder  
about...

I understand  
what you are saying,  
but I think...

I figured  
out that...

I would like to  
point out...

I think the  
author is  
trying to  
say...

This makes me  
think about...

Could you  
show me?

Talking starts with listening...  
talking is powerful.

Allow thinking time.

Can they hear you? Check by asking  
"What did I say?"

Learn to listen skillfully to move the  
talk on.

Slow your speech down to match  
theirs.

Extend, enrich, develop and deepen.

In the moment vs at the right  
moment. Teach clear speech sounds  
(how it was said) after they have  
finished (what was said).





# 4 Specific Areas

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



# Maths

- Numbers
- Numeral Patterns



We follow the Maths Mastery approach, aimed at securing a deeper understanding of number and number patterns.

## Children learn to:

- Subitise
- Count on fingers
- Count with accuracy
- Identify, sequence and write numerals
- Discuss more / fewer and make comparisons
- Explain their thinking
- Develop reasoning skills
- Represent their thinking and learning through pictures, photos and written methods.







***"From the day our children are born (yes), to the day they tell us to stop, we should read to them," (Michael Rosen)***



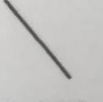
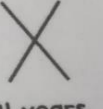

# Literacy

**PRE-WRITING SHAPES**

Children should be able to form these 9 pre-writing strokes before asking them to write.

			
2 years	2½ years	3 years	3½-4 years

				
4 years	4½ years	4½ years	4 years 11 months	5 years 3 months

Children who can adequately draw the oblique cross can copy a significantly higher number of letters than little ones who cannot.

- Talking about and sharing books
- Print in the environment
- Early mark making and writing



'Before children write a story, they need to play a story'



## Immersing ourselves into a story ...

- Using actions
- Mapping / sequencing
- Reciting together
- Using our own ideas
- Role play



## Talk 4 Writing



# Phonics



Nursery Class – Phase 1 (Listening, Rhyme, Rhythm, Music, Alliteration, Blending sounds)

Reception following Early Letter Sounds (ELS) - starting from Phase 2. Introduce letter sounds and shapes which build to make words - s-a-t, p-a-t, p-i-n, t-i-n

Children learn to write the letter shapes – not cursive.

Secret to success – GOOD LISTENING!

This starts at home.

# Phonics

**Phase 1** – teaches children to listen to familiar sounds and distinguish one sound from another

Strong focus on listening, rhyming and saying the sounds

Flexible phonics groups – assessed on a regular basis

Direct teaching AND exploring through play

## How do we teach phonics?

- We use a simple, consistent approach to teaching phonics.
- We have mnemonics and rhymes to support learning and recall
- We teach phonics every single day from the first days of Reception



# Learning to read



## Supporting your child with reading at home

ELS Essential Letters and Sounds

- Only 1 in 3 children are read a bedtime story night
- Reading a bedtime story every night to your child improves their outcomes
- If your child views themselves as a 'good reader' when they leave Primary School they are more likely to earn a higher salary in their 40s.



ELS Essential Letters and Sounds

## Supporting your child with reading at home

- Children are only reading from books that are entirely decodable
- Your child should be able to read their book confidently
- We only use pure sounds when decoding words (no 'uh' after the sound)
- We want them to practise reading their book 4 times across the week working on these skills:

decode

fluency

expression



*Reading less than weekly to a three-year-old is associated with a child being four months behind a child who was read with daily when they were three.*



# Building up sounds isn't easy!

**ELS** Essential Letters and Sounds

## Supporting your child with writing at home



You can use the spelling sequence with your children at home to support them with their writing.

Let's try this with the word: rain

We also practise saying our sentences before we write them to make sure we write the sentence we have planned and to ensure it makes sense!



# Why a play based approach?

**“Nothing lights up a child’s brain like play.” ~  
Dr Stuart Brown, M.D.**

“Did you know that the most important interactions you have with a child can happen through play? By engaging in playful serve and return with a child, you can literally help build stronger connections in the brain. Strong neural connections are the foundation for all of a child’s future learning, behavior, and health.”

**- UNICEF, Director Jack P. Shonkoff, M.D.”**

## How do the teachers support this?



- Playing IS learning
- Might look like ‘just playing’
- Valuing children playing and extend upon opportunities – take their lead
- The environment is carefully planned to develop children’s progress
- Challenging activities to support learning
- Careful balance between adult and child led learning
- Opportunities for play based learning continues into KS1



What does this look like?

- Structured routines – visual timetables used to support all learners.
- Time for free flow play
- Adult led and child led opportunities
- Rich questioning opportunities to develop children’s learning extending ideas and vocabulary



# We will...

- Provide a motivation and exciting learning environment
- Treat your child as a unique child
- Work with you – ready to answer questions
- Speak with you about any concerns we have



# How can you help?



- Check the class webpage regularly + use class email
- Check your child's book bag daily
- Where possible, attend the open afternoons
- Establish a good routine at home
- Develop healthy lifestyle choices together
- Try to set limits to screen time
- Contact us with any questions, however small
- Work with and support us
- **Register with a local dentist!**
- **Use your health visitor (under 5's)**
- **Reception:**
- Yellow reading diaries are used to communicate and both these and reading books are brought into school **daily**
- Engage in the home learning

[Robins@watlington.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:Robins@watlington.oxon.sch.uk)

[Hedgehogs@watlington.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:Hedgehogs@watlington.oxon.sch.uk)

## Some useful ideas



### Bookstart | BookTrust

Spot numbers when out and about and talk mathematically

### Teach your monster to read

Local library

Count everything – knives and forks, fruit, socks...

Bedtime stories – every night

Story CDs at home/ in the car

Outside learning, enriching visits and experiences and day to day stuff.... walks, playing at the park, visiting family, cooking, washing, talking about the weather!

Be kind to yourselves.... 'Comparison is the thief of joy'.