



## Lower Darwen Primary School

We are proud of our school.

### Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum: Intent, Implementation and Impact

#### Intent

At Lower Darwen Primary School we aim to provide motivating first-hand experiences whilst encouraging our children to build resilience, ambition and a lifelong love of learning. We recognise that all children are unique, celebrating and welcoming differences within our school community. Our Early Years Curriculum has been designed to reflect the nature of our intake and follow and build upon our school drivers. It aims to teach the children the importance of respect for all people, creatures and the environment while they develop into confident and articulate individuals.

Our ambitious curriculum aims to teach all children the skills and knowledge in order that they reach the seventeen Early Learning Goals set by the Department of Education. We work hard on self-regulation starting in the Early years to ensure children are able to focus, monitor, regulate and bounce back from challenges. We feel this is a vital life skill that the children will build upon throughout their life.

We aim to:

- Provide a curriculum that offers children a wide range of opportunities. We will work on broadening their experiences providing opportunities to try new things and encouraging them to relish a new challenge.
- Provide high expectations encouraging them to develop perseverance and self-belief so that they can problem solve and achieve far more than they expected.
- Provide a learning environment that helps children achieve their potential and support those who need additional help in order to maximise their chances of achieving the Early Learning Goals.
- Provide children opportunities to develop their sense of wellbeing and ability to regulate their feelings so that they feel confident in our community and are equipped with all the tools they need to transition to Year 1 effectively.
- Develop the skills and expertise of staff working in EYFS through regular and comprehensive professional development

#### Implementation

Our curriculum follows the Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. This document specifies the requirements for learning and development in the EYFS and provides the prime and specific areas of learning we must cover in our curriculum. Each topic planned is included in the curriculum for specific reasons and we want to ensure that all children leaving the Reception Year are ready to start the Key Stage 1 curriculum. Topics are introduced with a good quality storybooks or age appropriate non – fiction texts. Using books in this way teaches children that books and reading form the basis of all learning.

While our curriculum is topic based, we also follow our children's interests, incorporating these into our curriculum and continuous provision in an exciting and engaging way that will move the children's learning forward. This may involve following a class theme where we take advantage of cross curricular links in order to combine transferable skills and develop a wide-ranging vocabulary which underpins the children's learning. This may also include following individual children's interests and making the most of those focused moments where the teaching and learning can be maximised in a one to one way with teacher and child. Each year creates its own unique blend of whole class, guided,

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adult directed play and child-initiated play activities dependant on the nature and needs of the class of individuals.

Children in EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and thinking critically and creatively and this takes place both indoors and in our outdoor area. Our outdoor area is open all year round and in all but the most challenging weather conditions. Children make their own decisions about where they learn best and teachers ensure that there are opportunities for all areas of learning both inside and outside.

The school follows the **Floppy Phonics** programme. Every child has access to a phonics session every day with intervention opportunities for those who find this area of learning more difficult. Each pupil also has their own 'Oxford Owl' login so that they can read books that are at their phonics level online at home.

We provide effective and focused intervention for those children who are finding learning challenging and are not on track to meet expectations at the end of the year. This will be provided in an inclusive way and support from parents is also enlisted at an early stage to ensure that the children have every chance to achieve the Early Learning Goals. We will also request support from other agencies should we see fit.

The EYFS team collect evidence of children's learning through work completed and 'wow' moment observations, which are recorded and shared with parents on their child's dojo portfolio. We use the Dojo App to communicate with parents about their children's learning and we share the learning we have done each day through the class stories section. Parents contribute to the knowledge we have of the child in school by sending in their own wow moments from home, which the children proudly share with their peers in class.

We love to provide children with opportunities that they have not experienced before or that enhance their learning in school. Many of our children have limited experiences of being outside in nature. Each week groups visit the Wild Wood area. The main focus of these sessions is about developing children's knowledge about the natural environment, how they can help nature, use nature to creatively express themselves and skills they can use when out in nature. Each of the 7 areas of learning within the Foundation Stage are also addressed, whether it's Fine Motor skills when making a twig and vine frame, Expressive Art and Design when mixing natural objects such as mud and berries to produce paint, or Understanding the World through planting and growing vegetables and seeds. Many of our pupils have had limited opportunities to develop their food prep and cooking skills. We believe these skills are essential and so regularly incorporate cooking into our learning. Children are encouraged to develop their independence during snack by preparing and serving their own toast, fruit and/or milk. They problem solve by applying their knowledge (such as counting and measuring), follow directions and learn about cause and effect. Pupils gain a better understanding about where food comes from and healthy eating.

Trips and visitors are also used to develop pupil's knowledge, understanding and life skills. Some of these trips may be to the local church, shop, park and library as well as to educational based organisations. We hope that by visiting free, local places, such as the library, families may be encouraged to use such facilities more often. In some homes quality interactions can be limited. Therefore, each week we send home a 'Discussion Prompt'. These are varied and can be about anything, such as 'If you could be invisible for the day, what would you do?', 'Talk about something positive that happened today' or 'Would you rather fly like a bird or swim like a dolphin? Why?'.  

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Throughout the year the Foundation Stage Team work closely together, discussing the learning taking place, any changes to provision or the curriculum, and moderating with one another. While we work slightly differently to meet the needs of the children, we ensure that our pedagogy and values are consistent.

As a Foundation Stage Team we also meet to discuss each pupil in detail, ensuring we have a rounded picture of every child and know how we can continue their learning journey. Children are invited to 'Stay and Play' sessions, first with their parents or carers, and then without their adult. We also allow our new intake to come in with our current class and share our 'Story Time' session and talk with the current class.

At the end of the Summer term and the beginning of September Reception staff also conduct Home Visits to get to know children and families in a familiar setting. We feel by creating a strong partnership with our parents we are able to set the scene for the children to thrive in the early years. By knowing and understanding our children and their families, we can offer help and support to those that need it the most to ensure a positive start to each child's education journey.

By the end of the year we provide opportunities for our Year 1 teacher to come to observe and interact with the Reception children within their daily routine. The Year 1 teacher experiences their daily structure and lesson structure, as well as gaining a better understanding of the children's current levels and how needs are met within the Foundation Stage. During the Summer term, the Year 1 teacher will visit to read stories and carry out circle times allowing all parties to get to know each other better. All staff members working within the two classes also meet to discuss needs, home life and next steps for each pupil before they move to Year 1.

The team in Reception work tirelessly to ensure that children are surrounded by a kind, caring and happy environment which helps them develop the skills they will need in their journey through school and the wider world. It is a positive place to be where resilience, perseverance and successes are celebrated and every child feels valued and respected.

### **Impact**

The impact of the EYFS curriculum is reflected in having well rounded, happy and confident children transitioning into Year 1.

We measure progress and children's learning across the year through formative and summative assessments which are based on the staff's knowledge of the child, their learning books and recorded photographs and videos. Our planning and provision are based on the needs of and next steps for our children, and can often change or be adapted due to our daily interactions and assessments. Those children who are not on track are vigorously monitored and meetings are held with the leadership team to discuss the support that has been put in place for these pupils and the next steps that need to be taken to ensure they are making good progress. We aim to meet the National and Local Authority data for children achieving Good Level of Development. Almost all our children make more than the expected steps progress from their starting points.

The judgements of our school are moderated within the Foundation Stage Unit, Key Stage 1, leadership team and other schools. This means judgements are secure and consistent with government guidelines.

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