



Our Aspiration

The EYFS at Priory Rise gives children the best possible start to their education, developing each child to become the best version of themselves. We want our children to establish solid foundations, on which they can build their future learning journey, so they can continue to flourish throughout their school years and beyond, ensuring a good level of development is achievable for all our children from entry until exit into Year One.

The EYFS at Priory Rise prepares children for learning in Key Stage 1 and the National Curriculum. We acknowledge that children do not learn in a linear way and that individuals progress at different rates. We ensure our provision is personalised by nurturing children’s interests, building strong relationships, enabling each child to make the best progress possible, with the expectation for all to achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) on completion of the EYFS. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural themes are embedded into all aspects of our rich and diverse curriculum. British Values are recognised and celebrated in daily life – as part of our inherent work on our school values. Every child’s culture is recognised, respected, and valued. Equality and diversity are at the heart of our school ethos.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum is shaped by the 4 overarching principles outlined in the statutory framework. These are...

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

Children are given high quality teaching and learning experiences which enable them to achieve the ELGs. Children will develop their language skills; become effective speakers and listeners and improve their vocabulary through a well-balanced diet of direct teaching and play. Pupil outcomes will remain high, facilitated by a rich and balanced curriculum which is continually reviewed.

Curriculum Design

We use the Educational Programmes to guide our provision alongside the Effective Characteristics of Teaching and Learning. We recognise that these programmes and characteristics overlap and are interwoven.

Areas	Educational Programme
Communication and Language	The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children’s language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a



	range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Children’s personal, social, and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm, and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate, and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.
Physical Development	Physical activity is vital in children’s all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy, and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child’s strength, co-ordination, and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination, and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control, and confidence.
Literacy	It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems, and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).
Mathematics	Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space, and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, ‘have a go’, talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.
Understanding the World	Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children’s personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries, and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses, and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes, and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically, and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children’s vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.
Expressive Arts and Design	The development of children’s artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear, and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary, and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to, and observe.



Effective Characteristics of Teaching & Learning	
Playing and Exploring	- children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
Active Learning	- children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
Creating and Thinking Critically	- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Children learn about the world in which they live through a series of planned topics which foster their cultural capital, study the cultural calendar, and investigate current affairs. Alongside, children experience daily direct teaching sessions for phonics, writing, numbers & patterns, and handwriting. Planned progression is more rigid for phonics and numbers & patterns as children follow systematic programmes of teaching and learning which build in skills and knowledge over time (see separate documents for knowledge and skill progression in each).

Play

Children have plenty of opportunities for free play in an environment which has been set up to engage interest, stimulate curiosity, and fuel imagination. Our continuous provision takes account of children interests so it is not a rigid curriculum but flexes to accommodate each cohort, adapting to their needs. Our adult team act as playful partners with children who are expert at supporting adventurous/imaginative play through observation and knowing when to interact or offer suggestions. Children will develop effective characteristics of learning by experiencing a learning environment which is totally engaging and captivating, one in which children will want to explore and become immersed. The learning environment will provide them with opportunities to explore and develop their interests, extending ideas through imagination, language, interaction and the use of high quality and varied resources. Children will learn to investigate, explore, ask questions, and show good curiosity about the world in which they live. Children will learn how to care for their environment, manage resources and tidy away independently with a growing sense of how to keep themselves safe. Children will be able to express their wants and needs, sharing emotions with increasing ability to self-regulate through play, strong relationships, and enjoyment of school.

Assessment

Throughout the EYFS we use Development Matters and Birth to Five Matters documents to track the development of children, ensuring as practitioners we know the children well, how they learn and the pace of their progress. We identify next steps and incorporate these into our play with children as well as the planned teaching sessions. We carefully monitor children's progress in the effective characteristic of teaching and learning, and the 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas, keeping records where necessary and useful. Progress is shared with parents on a day-to-day basis using an online learning journey for their child. Parents can, and are actively encouraged to, contribute to these with comments and observations from home. We use Target Tracker, for data drops in line with the rest of the school, to store and analyse data about progress and attainment. In the first 6 weeks of children starting the Reception year they take part in the interactive RBA (Reception Baseline Assessment) and are assessed against the Early Learning Goals on exit before starting Year One.



Nursery

Phonics - The whole school follows Little Wandle Letters & Sounds Revised as a phonics programme to ensure children make rapid progress as early readers and writers. Children progress into Year One prepared for the Phonics Screen in June of that year, where consistent high results are achieved. Children in Nursery follow Phase 1 of the Little Wandle Letters & Sounds phonics programme. In Phase 1 there are 6 aspects from general sound discrimination, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration and voice sounds.

Dough Disco - Dough disco involves moulding dough in time to music and performing different actions such as rolling it into a ball, flattening it, putting each individual finger into the dough, rolling it into a sausage and squeezing it. This activity helps to strengthen each child's fine motor muscles to enable them to develop a solid pencil grip which will help to develop their writing skills.

Music & Movement – Weekly children visit the hall where they take part in singing and dancing to well-known songs and rhymes using actions and props. Children will build a large repertoire of songs and dances which supports language and memory development whilst build coordination, fitness and muscle strengthening.

Mathematics – At Priory Rise we call this Numbers & Patterns. Each week children are introduced to a mathematical concept. Through this session they will have opportunity to develop their mathematical language, knowledge and skills. Children will be able to listen to stories, sing songs, watch video clips and play games to develop their mathematical understanding, as well as developing this area through play.

Topic – In nursery our topics are story based and planned on a weekly basis, these are used to teach the children all about the world in which they live through stories and their own experiences. The stories are chosen to reflect the needs and interests of the children. Stories are shared with the children followed by direct teaching opportunities. Children visit the library once a week choosing a book to take home for the week.

PSHE – We follow Jigsaw across the school, this starts in Nursery (see separate overview).

Reception

Phonics – Following the Little Wandle programme children learn phonemes from Phase 2 and 3 - they are taught how to apply these when blending to read and segmenting to write. In Phase 4, whilst continually recapping on prior learning to make knowledge sticky, children become more proficient at applying phonemes from Phase 2 and 3 moving onto consonant clusters when reading and writing. Children are given opportunities to practice these skills as part of their play in the continuous provision too.

Mathematics - Numbers & Patterns is a series of lessons taught over the course of the year to develop children's understanding of the number system, shape, space, measures, patterns and calculations, and mathematical vocabulary. In line with the rest of the school we have adopted a maths mastery



approach which enables children to deepen their knowledge of mathematical concepts. During the lessons children will explore concepts using concrete resources, games, and investigation. We use the much loved and brilliant Numberblocks, as well as well-known stories and rhymes as a means of teaching children key mathematical concepts. Children are then able to apply, investigate, and practice the knowledge and skills learned in their play.

Topic – Topics are planned usually on a weekly basis, but may last longer, to teach children all about the world in which they live through stories, visits, visitors, video, and experiences. This is not a rigidly planned programme - the topics change to reflect the needs and interests of the current cohort. Topics have direct teaching sessions as well as opportunities for children to investigate them for themselves through the continuous provision or teacher led activities.

Reading - Planned weekly guided reading sessions use texts which are predominantly linked to the topic to encourage vocabulary development and embedding of key teaching points through a joined-up approach. Children read phonics texts matched to their levels of development and a range of stories, poems, and non-fiction texts to develop their word reading and comprehension skills. Children who make slower progress are given support to better keep pace with their peers. Children take phonics books home to practise their reading skills with parents – texts are carefully matched to their abilities. Children visit the school library once a week where they can choose a book which can be shared at home.

Writing – We use The Write Stuff as the basis for our teaching and learning of writing knowledge and skills. Writing is again linked to topics and guided reading texts to enable a deep understanding of subject matter and vocabulary. We take time to ensure children are confident speakers using full sentences and have a sound phonics toolkit before asking them to write. This enables children to have good starting points and confidence for becoming capable writers. Children explore writing for a variety of purposes using high-quality texts and media as models on which to base their ideas for writing.

Handwriting – Taught as a daily practise session where children practise writing the sound of the day. Children learn to use effective pincer grips.

Art, Music, PE and PSHE – Teacher led sessions are provided each week in these areas, see the separate overviews.