



# Oasis Academy Fir Vale

Early Years Foundation Stage Approach



*Enabling*  
environments  
"mobilise the ENERGY,  
ATTENTION, curiosity  
and FOCUS  
of children"  
*Howard Gardner*

We want our children to:

- \* Experience the joy of discovering new things
- \* Develop a thirst for learning through interesting, play based activities
- \* Develop communication skills to enable them to express themselves
- \* Develop positive relationships, understand their emotions and learn to self regulate
- \* Develop ambitious learning skills to enable them to be successful in their educational journey and beyond
- \* Experience the natural environment outside and access learning on a larger scale

To match our unique context, we have designed a bespoke curriculum based on the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters.

Our curriculum has real life experiences, language development and social and emotional development at its heart.

It is ambitious as it aims to address social disadvantage by raising aspirations and removing barriers to learning in terms of language, experience and school readiness.

The characteristics of effective teaching and learning are woven into all that we do so children have the opportunity to try something new, be resilient, solve problems, take risks and reflect on their learning. We have high aspirations for all and we value each child as an individual.



# Implementation

We have organised our provision into a Foundation Building Stage focusing on children's stage of development and readiness for school. We plan and organise provision in each room and outdoors according to stages of development. Each room is carefully designed based on children's starting points and next steps, ensuring there is a progression in terms of layout, organisation, adult role and resourcing. We have high ambitions for every child regardless of their starting points and through the year children can progress through the rooms. In all rooms there is a strong focus on routines and learning skills which are taught and reinforced.

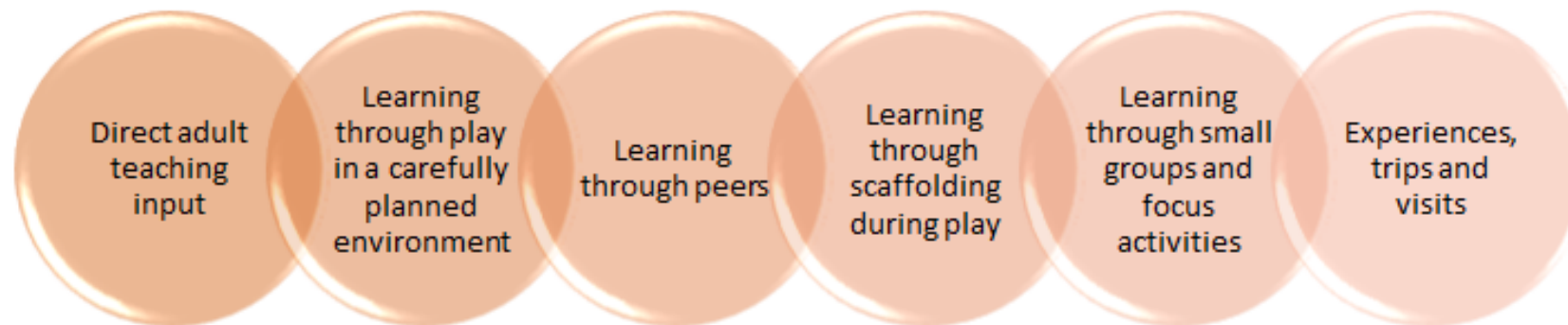
- ❖ We provide our children with first hand, practical experiences both indoor and outdoors to help learning begin to stick by building neural pathways and schema in the long term memory.
- ❖ We tailor play based learning and teaching to the particular needs and skills of the children through in the moment planning and thematic delivery commencing in Reception which enables a balance of child initiated and adult led teachable moments.
- ❖ We have a strong focus on language and communication through adult interactions and small group language interventions underpinned by Speech and Language Therapy specialist advice.
- ❖ Adult directed teaching sessions focus on language development through stories for talking. Personal, social and emotional development is promoted through circle time, listening Lola and beat baby. We teach phonics using Letters & Sounds phase 1 materials followed by Read Write Inc. Early maths skills are taught using the White Rose maths scheme.
- ❖ We focus on the characteristics of effective teaching and learning; playing and exploring, active learning and creative & critical thinking. We teach children these learning dispositions so they can progress well from their individual starting point and take advantage of future opportunities.



# Implementation continued

- ❖ Induction is tailored to individual experiences and needs. Using home languages where possible builds strong parent partnerships from the start.
- ❖ We use initial baseline assessments and in year checkpoints to group children according to their stage of development.
- ❖ All adults teach and reinforce school ready routines frequently as the numbers of children accessing early education is low and in year mobility is high.
- ❖ We support self care and healthy lifestyles through daily routines including breakfast bagels, toothbrush club and physical activity outdoors.
- ❖ We deliver parental support on settling children in school, toilet training and sleep routines in partnership with health professionals.
- ❖ We teach character development through the Oasis 9 habits so children are given the tools to make an active contribution to diverse society.
- ❖ We teach children to recognise their emotions and how to begin to regulate them in a stage appropriate way.
- ❖ We work in partnership with parents and carers and other professionals to identify and support any potential additional needs early.

In the Early Years, children learn through a wide variety of approaches. This includes:



Children need a balanced curriculum which includes teaching which has been carefully planned according to their developing needs and interests, as well as plenty of time for spontaneous child-initiated learning.

They need organised, adult-guided learning to bring new ideas and experiences into their lives and for the direct teaching of new skills and concepts. These will deepen or consolidate their learning over time.

The use of themes in Reception ensures schemas are developed effectively so learning builds over time and explicit links can be made, resulting in a deep understanding of core concepts.



### **Nursery Sheffield (1st stage)**

This stage is focused on ensuring the children develop the key school readiness skills such as attention, social skills and language. Through valuing every child and believing that every child is capable of making good progress, we can ensure that no child is left behind.

We focus on an In the Moment approach where topics and enhancements are taken from observing pupils and getting to know their interests to turn them into teachable moments.

This approach is supplemented with objective led planning each session in either small groups or on a 1:1 basis:

- Understanding language through Grandma Worldly Words sessions and Play and Say
- Early phonics and listening skills
- Number, subitising and counting rhymes
- Circle time sessions and character building focusing on key social skills, listening and self regulation
- Story, nursery rhyme and poetry basket times
- Physical skills
- Class author and Pie Corbett text sharing

Children's experiences are widened with adult led activities and through enhancements to continuous provision. Learning, progress and achievements are recorded using spotlight focus sheets, electronic learning journeys and a class floor book.

Summative checkpoint assessments are recorded using an electronic system. We plan for next steps using a 2 week cycle of target setting based on area of learning, data analysis and pupil progress discussions.

### **Reception England (2nd stage)**

We focus on a balance between In the Moment and thematic led learning in our Reception England class.

#### **In the Moment**

We focus on an In the Moment approach where enhancements are taken from observing pupils and getting to know their interests to turn them into teachable moments. These moments are recorded on spotlight focus sheets and displayed in the classroom.

#### **Thematic Teaching**

The Oasis curriculum in the Early Years provides a structure and sense of direction, whilst ensuring there are ambitious opportunities for children to learn. Through valuing every child and believing that every child is capable of making good progress, we can ensure that no child is left behind. Children's experiences are widened through mapping out overarching potential themes and key skills, careful planning of the environment and purposeful, targeted assessment.

#### **Communication and Language**

Every day starts with bagel talk and poetry basket time to support children to develop their vocabulary, communicate and begin to talk about their learning and achievements. Children also enjoy story time each day. We focus on widening vocabulary with Grandma Worldly Words where children will be explicitly taught new words in meaningful contexts.

#### **Phonics**

Children have a daily phonics session through which they are taught how to discriminate between sounds and orally blend using Letters and Sounds phase 1 activities. Listening, attention and social skills including turn taking are also developed through small group learning including Beat Baby, Listening Lola and Attention Autism, Children progress to Read Write Inc sessions which focus on grapheme phoneme correspondence.

#### **Maths**

Children have a daily early maths adult led teaching activity using White Rose Maths.

#### **Fine Motor skills**

Children access small group and adult initiated play based learning to develop their motor skills using Dough Disco and Write Dance.



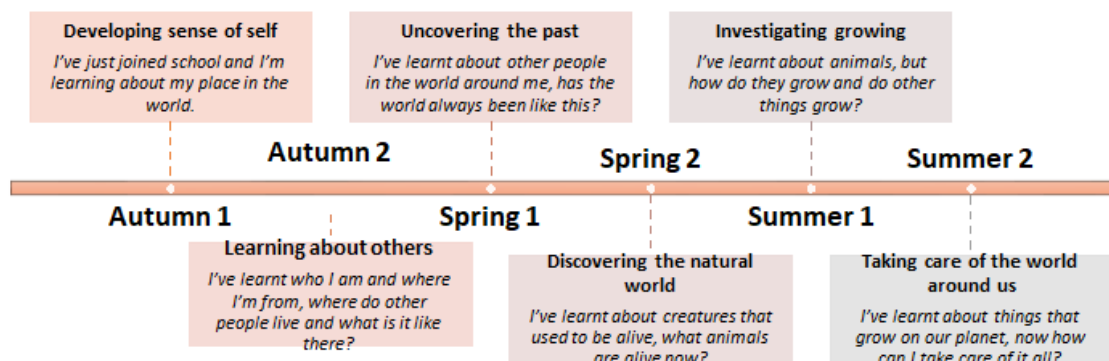
## Reception Wales (3<sup>rd</sup> stage)

We focus on introducing children to more formalised learning. This takes place through short adult led inputs, small adult led focus group learning and adult supported play activities.

### Thematic Teaching

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We use the Oasis Curriculum offer to compliment our approach. Children's experiences are widened through enhancements to continuous provision focused on the theme, season or cultural events. Each theme has an overarching thought and question.



### Literacy

Our literacy sessions focus on using a key text and deepening understanding of this through immersion, vocabulary teaching, text recall and guided talk or writing sessions. Once a week children take part in a guided mark making/writing focused group tasks based on the key text.

### Phonics

We teach children to read and write using a scheme called Read Write Inc. It aims to teach children to learn to read as quickly as possible so they can use their skills to read to learn and become lifelong readers. Children have a daily phonics session where they are taught sounds and how to use them to blend to read and segment to spell.

### Maths

Children have a daily maths adult led teaching activity using the White Rose Maths scheme of work which is complimented with adult focused activities in provision.

### In class interventions

Children are supported with their next steps through fine motor control activities, name writing practise, phonic flash cards, number recognition and counting practise and turn taking games.



# Outdoor Learning

- ❖ We value our outdoor environment and refer to it as 'Our Outdoor Classroom'
- ❖ We ensure the quality of the outdoor learning environment mirrors the indoor environment.
- ❖ We believe that children should have access to outdoor environments daily and we provide children with suitable clothing.
- ❖ Our outdoor classroom includes activities that allow pupils to explore nature, be physical and learn across all areas of learning on a messier, bigger scale.
- ❖ Our outdoor classroom is zoned, each area has continuous provision and is enhanced with activities based on children's interests and next steps.
- ❖ We utilise the energy and drive that our children demonstrate outdoors to provide teachable moments using our in the moment approach.

*Outdoor education provides opportunities to develop positive relationships with the environment, others and ourselves through interaction with the natural world. These relationships are essential for the wellbeing and sustainability of individuals, society and our environment. Outdoor education engages students in practical and active learning experiences in natural environments and a setting that is typically beyond the limits of our indoor classroom space. In these environments, children develop the skills and understanding to move safely and competently while valuing a positive relationship with the natural environment and promoting the sustainable use of their environment.*

There's no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing."

Alfred Wainwright

"The best kept classroom and the richest cupboard are roofed only by the sky."

Margaret McMillan (c1925)

Playing and learning outside helps children to understand and respect nature, the environment and the interdependence of humans, animals, plants, and lifecycles. The outdoor environment offers space and therefore is particularly important those children who learn through active movement.

Anyone who takes children outside regularly sees the enjoyment, and sense of wonder and excitement that is generated when children actively engage with their environment.



# Adult roles and interactions

## Key person

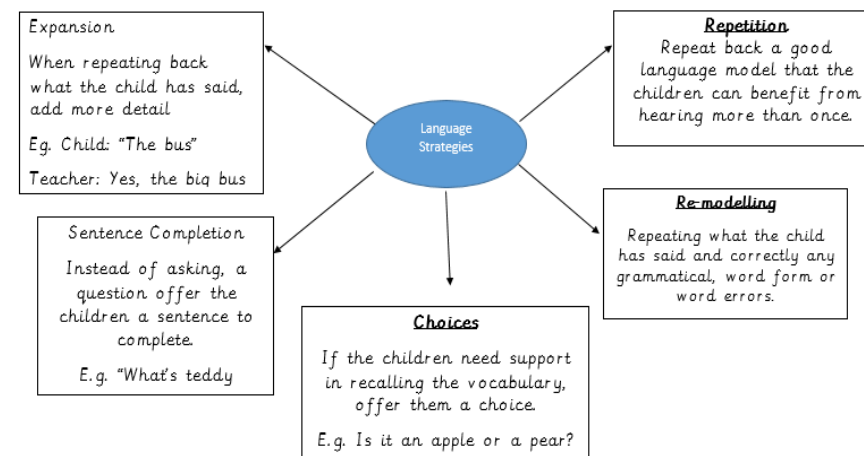
Every child has a key person. Children learn by observing and being with others. The key person is an important role model for the child who they can relate to and rely on. Children can concentrate and learn more effectively if not under stress so having a key person who is attentive and knows them well supports their personal, social and emotional development. The key person works alongside families to ensure that there is continuity of care for the child. The key person observes the child to identify how they learn through their play, their next developmental step, what their interests are and if there is a need for extra support.

## Environment

- The outdoor and indoor environment should be interesting, set out to support independence and choice, be well looked after, clutter free and kept hygienic and tidy.
- We have a range of continuous provision in and outdoors tailored to the stage of development of the children accessing the area.
- Enhancements and provocations for learning based on the children's interests, seasons, special and current events and the theme/topic are added to vehicles for learning on a regular basis.
- Challenges are also added to vehicles for learning based on the children's next steps.

## Interactions

- Adults tailor their interactions to children's developmental stage based on advice from speech and language therapists; naming, running commentary, asking open ended questions, modelling sentences.
- Adults support children to communicate their needs, feelings and thoughts using a range of strategies including OWLET – observe, wait and listen, effective teaching.





# Assessment

## Assessment

When a child begins their education with us, an initial baseline assessment is used to assess children's individual starting points using both the Early Excellence Assessment Tracker system (EExAT) and for our Reception children the Statutory Reception Baseline. The EExAT online assessment system is designed around a child development framework which uses six monthly, age related learning and development milestones to monitor children's developmental progress. EExAT provides a birth to end of EYFS summative assessment tracker with up to four assessment points per year. It gives focus to well-being and involvement and uses a series of assessment statements based on the:

- EYFS Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- EYFS Prime Areas of Learning.
- EYFS Specific Areas of Learning.

Our practitioners become knowledgeable about every child's achievements and areas for development by investing time interacting with them. This is used to inform the child's tracker in EExAT and allows progress to be monitored and supports the planning of next steps. Children's learning, progress and achievements are also recorded using termly spotlight focus sheets.

Summative assessments using The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile are completed at the end of a child's reception year and a yearly Record of Achievement report is produced which is shared with parents.

## Intervention

Language development is a key focus for interventions. Staff have had training from the Speech and Language Therapy service to support effective language development in play. Staff are also trained to deliver interventions including play and say and early language groups.

Children are also supported with their next steps through fine motor control activities, name writing practise, phonic flash cards, number recognition and counting practise and turn taking games.



# Parent partnerships

## **Induction process**

We offer parents a home visit where we fill in the admission form and build an initial relationship.

Families are then invited to a welcome meeting focused on school routines, and home learning opportunities. This includes a visit to the classroom.

## **Stay and Play sessions**

Hands on sessions are held for parents in Early Years Foundation Stage every half term. They focus on a theme such as outdoor play or maths. Parents can find out more about how children learn in school and how they can support learning at home.

## **Book at Bedtime**

Families and children come back to school for an exciting evening of story telling and book sharing.

## **Learning Journeys**

We encourage parents to share 'wow moments' about their child which form part of their child's learning journey.

Class floor books are used to share with parents the learning that takes place in school.

Learning journeys are shared with parents at parent evenings twice a year.

A record of achievement is sent home at the end of the year. Parents can meet with their child's class teacher to discuss the report. The report includes statutory information.

## **Parenting and Healthy Lifestyles**

We work in partnership with health professionals and the local family centre to support parents with developing key routines. Sessions offered focus on bedtime routines, toileting, healthy eating and safety in the home.

## **Class dojo, class email and the school website**

Parents can communicate with their child's class teacher using the class email address.

The school website and social media are used to celebrate learning as well as sharing ideas for home learning which include Purple Mash activities and short Vimeo lessons. Class dojo is used to share home learning ideas, celebrate learning and achievements and develop a two-way flow of information sharing.

# Sequential learning

## How we build a reader

We have a whole school reading route which we focus on to ensure all the building blocks are firm for building successful readers.

Parents are involved in their child's learning and are encouraged to talk to their child and tell stories at home. We have a selection of take home reading books in each class.

P1

I can listen to an adult for a short period of time.

Look at a book of own choice.

Recognise familiar everyday logos in the environment

Show awareness of sounds in the environment

Listen to nursery rhymes and simple stories.

Complete jigsaws and match objects to pictures

Sing familiar songs

P2

Listen to a full story with interest.

Recite and retell memorised stories.

Show awareness of in the environment and books.

Pick up on rhyme and alliteration.

Show enjoyment in sharing books and stories.

Develop visual memory skills by recognising own name, and familiar signs.

Have exposure to a wide range of books, rhymes, songs and stories.

P3

Have an understanding of and be able to discuss what they have read.

Apply a range of strategies when reading. E.g. Does it make sense?

Understand the purpose, organisation and convention of print.

Use phonic skills and knowledge.

Shows interest and motivation to read.

Read essential tricky words

Read/ engage with a wide range of texts for pleasure and information.

# Sequential learning

## How we build a writer

We recognise that pupils need language before they can become successful writer. As well as the physical dexterity to control writing implements to form letters correctly. “Reading and writing float on a sea of words.” We have a whole school writing route which we focus on to ensure all the building blocks are firm for building successful writers.

P1

I can use gross motor mark making movements from my shoulder and elbow.

I am aware print has meaning in the environment and find familiar things in

I can make marks in different textures.

Show awareness of sounds in the environment.

I choose to mark make linked to my own interests.

I recognise family pictures and signs

I learn new words.

P2

Begin to develop control from elbow to wrist to produce pre writing shapes.

I can tell an adult what I have drawn and ascribe meaning to other print in the

I can show interest in mark making and reasons for writing.

Pick up on rhyme and alliteration.

I enjoy copying letters.

I can write my name.

I begin to break the flow of speech into words.

P3

Have the correct grip and control to develop recognisable letters formed correctly

I can write letters to represent words.

Understand the purpose, organisation and convention of print.

I begin to use phonic skills and knowledge (initial sounds and simple cxc words).

I have an interest in writing in my play.

I write some essential tricky words.

I have a range of words to draw upon in my writing.



# Staff training

- Anne Ephgrave - In the Moment planning
- Sarah Quinn consultancy – EYFS approach, intent, implementation and impact
- Kym Scott training - Challenge in EYFS, Developing Early Writing, Developing Early Maths & 'A place to learn'
- Karen Wilding - Early Maths
- Trisha Lee - Helicopter stories and poetry basket
- Early Excellence - Continuous provision in and outdoors
- Support from Oasis National Lead Practitioners
- Rainbow Talk training
- Staff training from Speech and Language Therapists and Fusion Learning Support Service
- Debbie Watson - handwriting and art skills
- Mud kitchen and forest school training
- EYFS Leader led instructional coaching



# Impact

The unique nature of the academy is key when analysing data on the children's attainment and progress. Published outcomes do not reflect the achievements of children in our academy. This is because 'in year' mobility of children is high and the percentage of children who are new to English or in the early stages of English acquisition is also high. In addition to this the number of children who have had consistent schooling from the UK statutory school age is low. Attainment is higher for home grown children who have been in the academy longer. Our curriculum enables children to acquire English, develop lifelong learning dispositions, take pride in achievements, develop social skills and manage emotions in socially acceptable ways.

Parent partnerships are strong with families that have been in the community for a longer period of time. Parent attitudes to the importance of Early Education are slowly changing due to the intensive work staff have initiated in the community. The impact of this is shown by increased Nursery uptake. Nursery uptake has increased from 42% of places being filled In 2017-2018, to 65% in 2019-2020.

Partnerships with other agencies are strong, in particular with health. A positive impact of this has been parental engagement in a health led programme focused on healthy eating, toilet training, safety in the home and bedtime routines. This has resulted in parents saying "the school helps me help my child learn" which positively impacts on school readiness.





# Impact continued

Induction processes are tailored to our context to ensure each practitioner builds strong nurturing relationships based on the individual needs of children and their families. A positive impact of this is how children quickly adapt from struggling with making new attachments and having low emotional well being when starting school, to feeling safe, secure and happy.

Our focus on using every opportunity to develop language and teach children vocabulary has impacted well on children being able to communicate their needs and develop friendships. This is demonstrated by the progress children make in the strand of Communication & Language.

Our systematic approach to teaching routines, modelling play and supporting social development means that children want to try new things, they play purposefully and can concentrate at activities for longer. Children learn to be able to sit and listen as part of a group and take turns. Children develop resilience to setbacks, learn strategies to self regulate and take pride in their achievements. This is demonstrated by the numbers of children who progress well and achieve age related expectations in the strands of Self Confidence and Self Awareness, Managing Feelings and Behaviour and Making Relationships.



# Videos from Our Website

## High Quality Provision at Oasis Fir Vale

Take a look at our stimulating environment and activities on offer:

<https://vimeo.com/508462029>

## Parent Views

Here is a sample of positive comments parents have shared about our setting:

<https://vimeo.com/508464391>