

KEHELLAND VILLAGE SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS STRATEGY for 2023-2024

INTENT

Vision

- for all pupils to receive a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum
- for all pupils to be inspired by and enjoy an exciting and enabling classroom and outdoor environment
- for all pupils to feel safe and be safe
- to fully engage all learners and their families so that they make a secure and confident start to their school life
- for pupils to make strong progress informed by accurate baseline judgements
- to increase the numbers of pupils who reach the ELGs by the end of the Reception year

IMPLEMENTATION

Accommodation and organisation

At Kehelland Village School, we call our Reception children “Pebbles”, tying in with the school’s close links to Godrevy lighthouse and beach. The Reception children are part of Longships Class. This comprises Reception children, Year 1 and Year 2 children. This gives the class a lovely family atmosphere, with the younger children looking to the older children as role models, and the older children providing care and guidance for the new arrivals. The classroom is spacious and carefully arranged to provide tabled seating areas, together with a wide range of continuous provision play areas for independent learning. We have an attractive and comfortable book corner, a literacy table for mark making and writing, a Maths corner, construction kit area, funky fingers table, home corner, creative area and block play/small world corner. In addition, we have an adjoining covered area with sand and water trays, tuff spot stations and black boards. We also have a small playground exclusively for Longships Class, which contains a large sand pit, a wood chip kitchen, a dinosaur world, a pirate ship, a reading wigwam, and a range of materials for large construction. Excitingly, this year we will be redeveloping our small playground, with many of the ideas and plans coming from the children.

Staff

Longships Class has one teacher and three teaching assistants. All members of staff have First Aid qualifications and one teaching assistant has the higher Level 3 Paediatric First Aid qualification. This teaching assistant has special responsibility for the Reception children. The teacher is trained as a TIS (Trauma Informed Schools) practitioner, enabling her to have a deeper understanding of children’s anxieties and behavioural difficulties. One teaching assistant also has Learning Mentor training.

Curriculum overview

The EYFS curriculum follows the revised 2021 Early Years Curriculum Framework, supported by the revised 2021 Development Matters document. Learning opportunities are planned to address the specific needs of each cohort. Care is taken in planning and provision that all the children’s needs and interests are considered.

There are seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. The prime areas are communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development.

There are also four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design.

Transition into Reception

Children are invited to spend three play sessions in school in June, on one afternoon each week from 2pm to 3pm. The parents accompany their children on these visits, but on the final visit, they are encouraged to leave the children to play without them (gathering in the staff room, so able to return quickly if needed). The children are also invited to whole school events, such as Sports Day (Toddlers Race held) and our Summer Song Showcase. The children are also invited to come in for the morning on whole school transition day. They are able to meet their class mates (future Year 1s and Year

2s) and join in the classroom routines. The EYFS teacher also aims to visit children in their pre-school settings, when parents or nurseries have highlighted specific needs.

As we have a small cohort, all the children start at the very beginning of the Autumn term and there is no need for a phased start. Children with summer term birthdays are encouraged to start in the Autumn term and to attend full time if possible, in order to give them maximum learning opportunities and also to enhance their socialisation. However, children's needs are considered on an individual basis, and mornings-only starts, a reduced timetable or a delayed entry can be discussed with parents.

Engagement and involvement of parents

During the play sessions, parents' questions are answered on an informal basis. An evening meeting is held in early July for parents, where practical information about curriculum, uniform, school routines etc. is given and the expectations of the Reception year are discussed in some detail. Parents are given a written copy of the information discussed. Parents are encouraged to bring any questions and concerns immediately to Longships Class staff, either at the beginning or end of the day.

Throughout their time in Reception, an individual Learning Journey is kept for each child. This describes the child's progress in the different areas of learning, and is a compilation of notes, quotes, photos and observations. The parents contribute to the Learning Journeys by bringing Wow moments into school, written on supplied star stickers. The parents can also send photos and anecdotal comments via the Seesaw app, highlighting their child's achievements at home. Parents have open access to their child's Learning Journey, and are welcome to come into the classroom to view it at the end of the school day. The Learning Journeys are shared at parent consultation meetings.

Two parent consultation sessions are held in a year. The first is in the Autumn term and the second in the Spring term. In the meetings, the child's progress is discussed and suggestions made as to how to support the child with their learning. Parents' questions and concerns are addressed. At the end of the year, a detailed report is given to parents, stating the child's level of achievement in each of the 17 areas (emerging or expected) and including a description of the child's characteristics of effective learning.

The Longships Class Seesaw app is updated daily with information about current learning, including photos, videos and website links where appropriate. Text and photographs describing especially exciting class activities are also posted on the school Facebook page. This gives parents a better understanding of what their child is doing in school, allowing them to support and participate in their child's learning journey. Contact between home and school is made via diary messages and the Seesaw app. Once the children are reading books from the reading scheme, staff write in the diary to describe what the child has read in school. Parents are encouraged to similarly write in the diary about what the child has read at home.

Transition from Reception in to Y1

Longships Class is a mixed Reception/Year 1/Year 2 class, so transition is straightforward. The Reception children enjoy Transition morning, when they have the status of being a Y1, amidst the new Reception intake. This continues at the start of the Autumn term, where they feel a sense of responsibility about looking after the younger children. As Y1s they have the same play opportunities as the Reception children. Although the time spent doing more structured, adult-initiated work increases over the year, they still spend much time accessing the continuous provision areas. The older children provide excellent role models for the Reception children, who consequently learn the classroom routines, expectations and rules more quickly.

Baseline arrangements

Reception children are given time at the start of the year to settle into school. Assessments for baseline begin as soon as a child is seen to be happy in their new environment, judged using the Leuven Scale on the areas of Wellbeing and Involvement. The Government Reception Baseline Assessment is carried out within the first five weeks, by the Teaching Assistant most familiar with the children. Most school assessment is carried out informally during both adult-led and child initiated activities. Children are more formally tested on their knowledge of the letter sounds and understanding of number, although this is in a relaxed 1 to 1 context. The revised Development Matters handbook is used to make the

judgements for baseline assessment and for individual progress throughout the year.

Arrangements for quality assurance of Baseline

Discussion on baseline decisions is carried out between the Class 1 staff, (teacher and teaching assistants), who all have good knowledge of the individual children, owing in part to the small cohort size. External discussion also usually occurs within the TPAT EYFS hub and triad. Training update meetings are attended regularly by the teacher.

Measuring progress

Data will be collected in October, December, February, April and finally June, assessing children in the 17 areas of learning against the revised Development Matters descriptors, and the Early Learning Goal. This information is recorded in the children's individual Learning Journeys, to show progress to parents. A paper Individual Progress Monitoring Sheet is used. A separate copy is also kept which shows the children's score as a minus score against the final expected score of zero. If a child shows that they have not made sufficient progress within a 2 month interval, interventions will be put in place to accelerate progress. If a particular area of learning is showing a general low level, classroom practice will be planned to address that deficit.

Approaches to developing early language skills, including Phonics

Reading for pleasure

When children enter school, our aim is to immerse them in the world of books- books, books everywhere! Longships Class has an attractive and comfortable book corner, where children can sit quietly alone or companionably with friends to enjoy books of their own choosing. Props and puppets are provided to enable the children to engage in imaginative storytelling activities. The areas of continuous provision within the classroom also have linked books on display to encourage the children to research and develop their play. Copies of key texts explored in depth through our topic work are made available for the children to revisit and enjoy, encouraging an independent spirit of enquiry. In the outdoor area, the reading wigwam has a basket of books that are changed regularly. Throughout the day, adults share stories, nonfiction texts, poems and rhymes with the children, encouraging a love of literature in all its forms. Every week, children can choose a library book from our extensive school library to take home and share with their family.

Learning to read

Children start to learn to read on the very first day that they enter school. At Kehelland, we follow the Read Write Inc. phonics programme, which structures the reading learning process through daily systematic lessons. Auditory, visual and kinaesthetic methods are used to help the children memorise the letter sounds, addressing the different learning styles that children may have. A meeting for parents is held in the Autumn term to introduce the programme and to discuss how parents can best support their children. Parents are also invited into school to observe a lesson in progress.

Word Time

The RWI programme teaches the alphabetic code of the English language as Speed Sounds. The aim is for children to recognise and read them speedily. Much time is therefore given to the practice of these speed sounds.

Set 1 sounds m, a, s, d, t, i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, x, ck, ng, nk.

The children begin by learning the "pure sounds", that is the sounds of the individual letters of the alphabet. The letters are not learned in alphabetical order, but instead in an order that allows the child to start building words for reading and writing as soon as possible. The letter sound is first introduced by its sound alone (phoneme), and the children practise hearing that sound at the beginning of words. The written form (grapheme) is then introduced, with a visual/auditory cue attached e.g. Maisie, mountain, mountain for m. Using a finger to draw the sound in the air and tracing the letter on the page provides kinaesthetic reinforcement.

After a group of letters has been learned, the children begin to blend the sounds, using Fred Talk. Fred is a friendly frog character, who can only speak in disjointed sounds. The children practise repeating what he says, and then blending the sounds to make a word. They read phonetically regular Green words, using the Fred talk approach. They then start to

sound out and blend words for writing, initially moving magnetic letters on boards, before progressing to writing with pencil on paper.

After the pure sounds have been learned, the children learn the consonant digraphs- sh, th, ch, qu, ck, ng and nk. Each of these digraph sounds has a memorable rhyme attached to it, for example “I think I stink” for nk. Digraph sounds, where two letters make one sound, and trigraph sounds, where three letters make one sound, are called Special friends in the Read Write Inc. scheme.

Set 2 sounds ay, ee, igh, ow, oo, oo, (u) ar, or, ai, ir, ou, oy

The children progress onto the vowel digraphs/trigraph in Set 2. Children practise recognising the sound, before reading the sound within real and alien words, and then writing words containing the sound. Previously learned sounds are also reviewed each lesson through the speedy reading and writing of familiar words.

Set 3 sounds ea, oi, a-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-e, aw, are, ur, er, ow, ai, oa, ew, au, ire, ear, ure, ue, ie, tion, tious/cious

Usually in Year 1, the children move onto the vowel digraphs and trigraphs in Set 3. These present one or more alternative spellings for the vowel sounds learned in Set 2.

Children are assessed half termly to ascertain whether they are ready to move onto the next set of sounds. If they are not secure on their current sounds, they will continue to spend time consolidating them. Children who are finding it difficult to remember the sounds will be given daily 5- 10 minute intervention sessions, to ensure that they do not fall behind.

Book Time

Immediately following the phonics learning in the Word time sessions, the children practise reading books exactly matched to their phonic knowledge, enabling everyone to feel success. The children work in partners, acting as either the reader or the teacher, meaning that everyone is engaged all of the time. Much time is given to the practice of individual words in the focus book before reading it, using the Special friends, Fred talk, Read the word routine. Common exception words (Red words) are also practised. The first session introduces the book with an initial reading. The second session encourages greater fluency on reading. The third session encourages the child to read with a storyteller voice. After this session, the children take a copy of the book home, to read proudly to their family with fluency and a storyteller voice.

Reading comprehension skills are developed throughout the Book time lessons. The introduction of a new book encourages the understanding of setting and character and the development of vocabulary and prediction skills. After the third reading of the book, “Questions to talk about” activities are introduced. Retrieval skills are practised with “Fastest finger” questions, and inferential skills are practised with “Have a think” questions.

In addition to taking the Book Time book home after the third reading session, the children can take RWI “book bag” books or a RWI nonfiction books home to practise their reading. These books are exactly matched to the child’s current phonic knowledge, and easily recognised by their colour banding.

Approaches to building vocabulary

Children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary through discussion and repetition of words met in story books and topic activities. We aim to provide the children with vocabulary rich experiences each day, with stories, songs, rhymes and poems. The Booktalk approach is used weekly, where a story is shared with a small group of children. The adult encourages all the children to join in a lively discussion of the story, modelling vocabulary and sentence structure. NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention) sessions are held from January onwards for those children who require support. The class has a Word of the Day book, which features words linked to their learning. The inclusion of an illustration as well as an explanation of the word allows the Reception children to access and enjoy exploring more complex vocabulary.

Approaches to building early mathematical skills

In line with the new Early Years Curriculum Framework, the children will be expected by the end of the year to be working with numbers to 10 with a depth of understanding. The school will be following the Mastering Number programme. Numbers will be introduced gradually, a new number each week or fortnight during the Autumn term, with time at the end of each half term consolidating 1-5 and then 6-10. Many of the children on entry are already familiar with counting to 10, 20 or beyond. However, this is often just rote learning, with little understanding underpinning the chant. The exploration of a new number each week or fortnight promotes the understanding of what that number means, what the number looks like, how to write the number and how the number can be composed. The CBeebies Numberblock characters are used to introduce a new number, with video clips featuring how they relate to other numbers and a song about their special properties. Practical activities suggested by NCETM are used. Numicon is also used to help the visual recognition of the different numbers. A Maths area in continuous provision, with number books, giant and small Numicon, Numberblocks characters and plastic numbers allows the children to explore numbers independently during free play. Resources are enhanced regularly according to the topic area and children's interests. The importance of the ability to subitise is recognised, and activities involving dice and dominoes provided. Counting activities are practised daily in the mental starter session, counting on fingers and singing/dancing to action songs counting to and from 10/20. Adult-led counting and calculation activities are linked to the topic and current class enthusiasms, in order to stimulate interest and provide a meaningful context. Resources are additionally provided within continuous provision to enable the children to continue their exploration independently. When calculating- adding, subtracting, doubling and halving- the emphasis is on a practical, meaningful context. The children are encouraged to make their own recordings, gradually working towards a more standard presentation. There will be increased focus this year on Numerical patterns, with an emphasis on an awareness of place value, the ability to recognise the pattern in the number system and to count beyond 20, the recognition of odd and even numbers, and the relationship between doubling and halving.

Learning about Shape, Space and Measures is again linked as far as possible with the Class Topic, providing a meaningful context for investigation and problem solving e.g. using 2D shapes to create a ship picture etc. The Reception children use non standard units to measure. The exploration of shape and space is a fundamental part of art and craft and construction activities. The children are able to experience these within adult-led activities and child initiated play.

Approaches to all other EYFS teaching

Topic themes

Our topic themes provide the framework and stimulus for much of our learning. The EYFS curriculum has been planned as a two year rolling programme of two or three thematic areas per term. This allows the Reception children's learning to dovetail with the foundation subject learning of the Y1 and Y2 children in the class, giving the class a sense of cohesion and unified purpose. (Please refer to the EYFS Curriculum Plan and to our Guiding Light Curriculum to see further details of our EYFS and KS1 learning). During the Reception Year, the children will explore the topic areas through practical activities which are appropriate to their developmental level and to their interests. They will revisit the same themes in Year 2, exploring them in subject specific lessons to a deeper level of skill and understanding.

Our topic units of learning encompass all seven areas of the EYFS curriculum- Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Knowledge and Understanding of the World and Expressive Art and Design.

Wild Tribe Outdoor Learning

As part of their Understanding of the World learning, the children take part in a Wild Tribe outdoor session on a Thursday afternoon. These sessions are led by a Teaching Assistant who has undertaken Wild Tribe Outdoor Learning training. Activities may involve exploring seasonal changes, creating art and craft with natural materials, re-enacting stories set in the natural world (The Gruffalo, We're Going on a Bear Hunt etc.) and the acquisition of camp craft skills.

Physical Education

The Reception children have two P.E. sessions each week, led by the class teacher or a Go Active Sports Coach. The programme followed is the Real P.E. scheme. The Reception children have swimming lessons for one half term each year. They start in the beginners' pool at Carn Brea to build confidence, and then are moved into more advanced groups as they make progress with their swimming. Weather permitting, running laps around the school field to promote fitness and stamina is also practised in a relaxed and fun way. The school is also moving towards a daily 5 minute skip, and the Reception children will be encouraged to join in at their ability level (e.g. starting with stepping through a hoop).

Computing

The Reception children practise technology and computer skills during a dedicated session each week, but also within their daily learning. At Kehelland, we follow the Teach Computing Curriculum from the NCCE. The Reception children will be learning how to;

- Use cameras to capture feelings
- Communicate through walkie talkies
- Recognise different technologies in homes and school
- Keep safe online
- Programme Beebot

Art and Design

The Reception children have a wealth of opportunity to develop their art and design skills within continuous provision. There are opportunities for construction, block play, small world, craft, malleable play and funky fingers provided daily. In addition, they will receive discrete Art and Design Technology lessons, where they will learn specific skills and techniques.

Music

As well as daily exposure to songs and nursery rhymes, Music learning for Reception children takes place in lessons alongside the Y1 and Y2 children. The focus for KS1 is on learning about beat, rhythm and pitch, singing, listening to music from different genres and eras, composing and performing. The older children provide role models for the Reception children, who are able to join in at their own ability level. We use untuned percussion instruments, as well as Boomwhackers for our composition and performance strands.

Religious Education

During the week, the Reception children are taught R.E. on a Wednesday afternoon. We follow the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus and their learning will be addressing the questions of;

- Being special- where do we belong?
- Why is Christmas special for Christians?
- Why is the word God special for Christians?
- Why is Easter special for Christians?
- Which places are special and why?
- Which stories are special and why?

The focus is primarily on learning about Christianity, but other religions will also be explored as appropriate.

Timetable

The timetable is dictated by the importance of meeting the needs of both the Reception and the Y1/Y2 children, and at the same time creating a sense of class cohesion and unified purpose. Therefore, lessons are formally timetabled as Literacy, Maths, R.E., Music, Art, etc. A common theme is introduced to all the children as a class group at the start of a lesson, before they separate to pursue activities linked to that theme, at their age-appropriate level of learning and according to their age-appropriate learning style.

Approaches to supporting vulnerable and SEND pupils

Vulnerable children will receive extra support, in the form of the provision of resources or teacher/TA time. These may be on an individual or group basis, according to need. A nurture SEN teaching assistant is also available where needed. SALT activities will be delivered to those children under the remit of the Speech and Language team. Extra support will also be provided for any other children highlighted by the baseline assessment as being below the level typical for their age. Book talk and role play activities will be used with those who lack the confidence to speak in class to an adult. NELI sessions will also be used for those children who score lower scores on assessment for communication and language.

Personalised approaches

The EYFS teacher is TIS trained, and is able to provide individual support for children with PSED difficulties. This will take place within the classroom context or on a 1 to 1 basis during her non-contact time on a Thursday and Friday. One of the teaching assistants acts as a learning mentor within the school, and is able to provide support as needed. Various strategies are in place in the classroom to promote good behaviour and relationships. Children who follow the school behaviour rules of Ready, Respectful and Safe, and show themselves able to sit quietly, listen carefully, work diligently (Ready), be polite, be orderly, take care of things (Respectful) be caring, say kind words or be helpful (Safe), place their name in a star shape next to the appropriate description on the wall. They are rewarded with a gold star in their diary at the end of the day. Leading up to Christmas, the Kindness Elves come to visit the classroom. The children write letters to say how they have been kind and the elves send letters in return.

Development of staff expertise

The EYFS teacher has the opportunity to develop expertise through discussions in TPAT EYFS hub and triad meetings. The triad has pursued different projects which have been incorporated into teaching, namely Booktalk and Storymaking. Training has been undertaken in a variety of areas by both the teacher and the key Reception TA (NELI, Wild Tribe Outdoor Learning). Advice has been provided by the Early Years Service (Improvement) in order to maximise the potential of the classroom space for continuous provision. Improvements to the outdoor area are ongoing, and have been developed with advice from the Early Years Service and Early Excellence.

Leadership of Early Years

The EYFS leader is Mrs. Marion Davies. My performance management is carried out by the head teacher, Mrs. Ellie Watkins, as is the performance management of the two teaching assistants. I am supported in my role by the head and also by other EYFS teachers within the TPAT hub and triad. I am monitored and evaluated in my role by the head teacher and also by visiting SIP heads and school subject leads. Moderation of judgements against the 17 areas of learning are made within the TPAT EYFS hub, usually focusing on particular areas.

Safeguarding arrangements

The designated safeguarding lead is the head teacher, Mrs. Ellie Watkins. The safeguarding deputy is Mrs. Marion Davies. All Longships Class personnel have current Paediatric First Aid training and Tier 2 single agency Safeguarding training. One TA has the higher Level 3 Paediatric First Aid qualification. In order to keep the children safe within the school, the gates are locked at the start of the day. At the end of the day, the children are only released to their parents or known relatives, unless the school has received notification of an alternative arrangement. The children line up by the playground wall and the gate is opened for individual children, when the collecting parent has made themselves known to the member of staff.

Continuous checks and monitoring are in place to ensure that the indoor and outdoor environment is safe. Dangers inherent in any activities are noted and steps taken to minimise the risk. Risk assessments are carried out for out of school trips. In terms of intimate personal care, parents understand that staff will change their child if they wet or soil themselves occasionally. If regular intimate care is needed, the parents will be consulted and an individual Personal Care document drawn up for the child.

IMPACT

A broad and balanced curriculum

The detailed Kehelland EYFS Curriculum Plan will ensure that the Reception children receive a broad and balanced curriculum, preparing them well for KS1.

For all pupils to be inspired by and enjoy an exciting and enabling classroom and outdoor environment

The impact of the new classroom and outdoor layout will be evidenced by the enjoyment and enthusiasm with which the children access the continuous provision, and the independence and creativity of their learning. The Characteristics of Effective Learning will form the basis of judgements.

For all pupils to feel safe and be safe

We will continuously monitor the well being of the children, in order to identify and deal promptly with any emotional concerns. Impact will be measured by children coming into school happily, with no or little issues around separation from their parent/carer, and by their positive emotional regulation through the day. Safeguarding arrangements will ensure their physical and emotional safety.

Successful engagement

The intent is that parents are fully involved and interested in their child's learning. Communication will be made via termly letters of welcome, the school website, Facebook, the Seesaw app, introductory parent meeting, Read Write Inc. parent meeting, open afternoons, parent consultations and informal discussions. Impact will be measured formally via the Parent Questionnaire, but also informally via school/home relationships.

Making good progress

Data will be collected in October, December, February, April and finally June, assessing children in the 17 areas of learning against the revised Development Matters descriptors, and the Early Learning Goal. If a child shows that they have not made sufficient progress within a 2 month interval, interventions will be put in place to accelerate progress. If a particular area of learning is showing a general low level, classroom practice will be planned to address that deficit. Impact will be measured if the child or children are brought back on track.

Increasing the number of children who achieve a GLD at the end of June

The number of children achieving GLD in 2023 was 71%. The aim is to achieve 78% in 2024.