

# Little Stoke Primary School

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## EYFS Handbook

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*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.” Statutory framework for the early year’s foundation stage, Department for Education 2021*

## Our Intent and Aims

At Little Stoke Primary, we pride ourselves in:

- Giving each child a happy, positive and enjoyable start to their school life within a safe and secure environment
- Establishing solid foundations and foster a deep love of learning
- Enabling each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually in order to thrive in a diverse and ever changing world
- Offering a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development
- Offering a broad and rich curriculum
- Encouraging children to develop independence within a nurturing and supportive atmosphere
- Supporting children to build relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing
- Helping each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements by experiencing success and developing their confidence to work towards personal goals

## Legislation

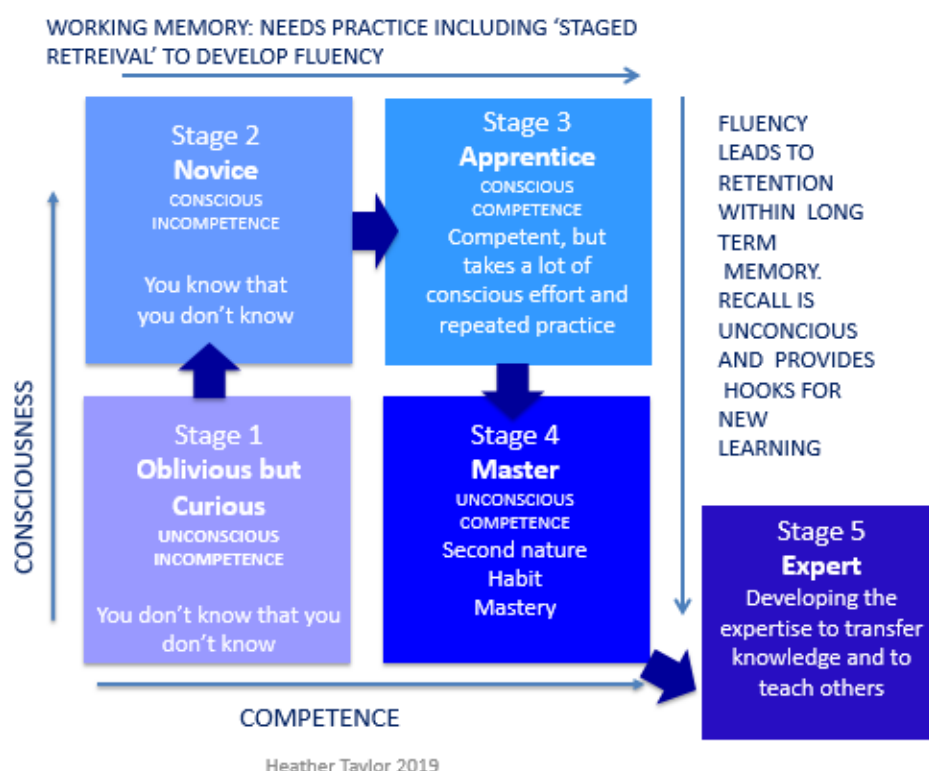
This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

## The Little Stoke Primary Connected Curriculum

The curriculum we have developed at Little Stoke is a knowledge-based curriculum that is strategically sequenced to allow learners to build on prior knowledge utilising carefully planned links within and between units. It resembles a 3D curriculum (Sealy, 2017) which has deliberately constructed vertical, horizontal and diagonal links. Learners will develop connections between schemas, which will allow them to make links to prior knowledge that is stored in long-term memory. By creating a coherent curriculum with links across year groups, including EYFS, subject schema will develop. As schema develop they become stronger and allow more links to be made which then makes it easier to retrieve the information from long-term memory.

By creating a knowledge-based curriculum, this will allow learners to free up working memory by using schema to draw on knowledge stored in their long-term memory. This will allow them to use their

## Why do knowledgeable learners find learning easier?



working memory to develop cognitive skills. 'Higher-order thinking is knowledge-based: The almost universal feature of reliable higher-order thinking about any subject or problem is the possession of a broad, well-integrated base of background knowledge relevant to the subject.' (E D Hirsch, 1996). Children will develop skills as a by-product of acquiring the knowledge. For example, children will learn the knowledge around how to develop a practical scientific experiment and then put this into practise using the knowledge to develop the skills needed to conduct the experiment. 'Knowledge and skill are intrinsically linked: skill is a performance built on what a person knows.' (Spielman, 2018).

We have developed a thematic curriculum that is based around knowledge acquisition, as we believe a knowledge-rich curriculum will help to combat educational inequality. The more a pupil knows, the more they are able to learn and understand.

The 'Pre – Themes' delivered in EYFS help to set the foundations on which further knowledge is built upon as the children progress into Key Stage One.

		Pre Theme 1	Pre Theme 2	Pre Theme 3	Pre Theme 4	Pre Theme 5	Pre Theme 6
History	EYFS	My family Facts about me and my class Jobs <i>Chronology</i>	Festivals around the world How Christmas has changed over time Toys past and present <i>Chronology</i>			Inventions from the past Timelines <i>Chronology</i>	
Geography		Little Stoke – getting to know the school and area <i>Location</i>	Weather <i>Change</i>	Simple maps for directions <i>Location</i>	Different habitats <i>Place</i>	Little Stoke and the world – comparing places Digital mapping – looking at countries around the world <i>Place</i>	Different habitats <i>Place</i>
Science		Human body 5 senses Seasons - Autumn	Seasons - Winter	Growing up Everyday materials – name some materials and notice how they feel/look different	Plants Seasons – Spring Animals and their habitats		Animals in different countries Seasons – Summer
Art and D&T			Mondrian	Cooking	Cooking Van Gough		Kandinsky
Forest School							
Links to KS1		T1.1 - humans are a type of animal, parts of the body, 5 senses T1.2 – what my school and local area are like T1.3 – different types of family	Themes 1.4– seasonal changes T1.3 – things were different when my grandparents/parents were young. There was a time before they were born. T2.1 – what are toys/objects made from T2.3 – how toys have changed over time T5.1 – weather and climate zones	T1.2 – using floor plans and labelled maps T2.1 – identifying everyday materials and their properties RSE y1 – growing up – changes from babies to elderly people	Themes 1.4– seasonal changes T3.2 – identify some wild and garden plants, describe their basic structure and needs T4.3 – name a variety of common animals and their structures	T1.1 – people can be older or younger than me, timelines T1.3 – there is a time before my grandparents were born T2.2, 5.1, 7.1 – comparing where I live with other places (London, Arctic, Jamaica) T4.1, 5.1 – UK and world maps	Themes 1.4– seasonal changes T4.3 – name a variety of common animals and their structures

## Recall/Spaced retrieval

New learning can be fragile and we know it is important to revisit and refresh this knowledge regularly to ensure it becomes embedded in the long-term memory, thus making it possible for a pupil to retrieve in the future. Sealy suggests that a child's memory gets stronger if they have had chance to 'forget a bit' as they have to work harder to 'find' the information. The more a child searches for knowledge the easier it then becomes to find on subsequent attempts. As a school, we used spaced retrieval at carefully planned stages to ensure children have the chance to recall the knowledge. We recognise that it is important for them to attempt to recall their knowledge independently as this strengthens the schema. If a child cannot recall, then the knowledge has not been retained and it will need to be re-taught. 'If nothing has been retained in long term memory then nothing has been taught.' (Kirschner, Sweller & Clark, 2006).

In EYFS opportunities to revisit and recall knowledge is built into the teaching and the environment. Images, photographs, text and numbers are used in the environment to help the children to revisit and recall prior knowledge helping the children to know more and remember more.

## Implementation

### Curriculum

Our reception class follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

There are four overarching principals that we are committed to supporting, which are:

- A unique child

All children and their families are valued at Little Stoke Primary School. As individuals, we understand that children will start their school life at Little Stoke with a wide and varied range of previous

experiences, interests, and will already have strong relationships with people in their lives who care for them. Getting to know these things is the first step in enabling us to meet each child's individual learning needs.

- Positive relationships

We believe that for pupils to be strong and independent they need to have confidence in the people around them. At Little Stoke Primary School we recognise that relationships built on trust and respect are vital to a child's achievements.

- Enabling environment

We recognise that an attractive, clean and stimulating space plays a vital role in the development of children's learning. An environment that reflects pupil interests, offers new experiences and provides opportunities for pupils to extend their learning, is essential to the early years classroom. We are advocates of play-based learning, as we believe this to be crucial to their development, allowing pupils to explore, consolidate, understand and create. Our learning environment reflects our belief that through play pupils will learn, develop independence and confidence, solve problems and learn about self-control and the need for rules. We want our pupils to be able to lead their own learning, using what they know and enjoy to learn and develop new skills. We believe that encouraging pupils to use their imagination will allow them to develop socially and emotionally, as well as increasing their language skills.

The environment plays a big part in developing skills across the entire early years curriculum. Regular observation and analysis of all areas of the environment take place, to ensure that each space provides the maximum opportunities to children.

Our indoor environment is organised and clutter free, resources are labelled using words and images, this enables children to develop independence and responsibility to access and put back the resources and their classroom.





We also have a large outdoor area where the children have access to lots of large-scale play equipment and resources that are used for adult led and child-initiated activities.



### Learning and Development

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- **Communication and language** - Listening, Attention and Understanding, Speaking
- **Physical development** – Gross motor, Fine motor
- **Personal, social and emotional development** – Self regulation, Managing self, Building Relationships.

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- **Literacy** – Comprehension, Word Reading, Writing
- **Mathematics** – Numbers, Numerical patterns
- **Understanding the world** - Past and present People, Culture and communities
- **Expressive arts and design** - Creating with materials, Being imaginative and expressive

## Personal, social and emotional development



At Little Stoke Primary School, we develop children's positive sense of themselves. We teach them about having respect for themselves and others, developing good social skills and a good attitude to learning. To help children develop positive relationships, adults in our setting form warm and caring relationships with all of the children. Adults model how to form positive relationships and how to manage feelings with actions and words. We also instil children with the confidence to become more independent in their own learning.

## Physical development

We provide many opportunities for the children to be active and develop both their fine and gross motor-skills. The children are encouraged to be physically active at many different times of the day, with both adult-led and child-initiated opportunities. We have large indoor and outdoor areas that enable this. At Little Stoke, children are supported in their understanding of exercise, sleep and eating healthily. At snack times, children have the opportunity to independently choose a healthy snack.



## Communication and language development



At our school, we understand the importance of children being able to communicate and use language in all of their development and learning. We provide children with high quality opportunities to improve and gain good speaking and listening skills. We know that the most successful way to do this is through the children's natural desire to play. Adults in our setting play alongside children, introducing new language and scaffolding children's play so that they regularly hear and use new words and phrases. Children are supported to develop their vocabulary and use more complex sentences in this context.

## Literacy



through role-play, or adapting the stories to use in small world play. The children learn to treat books with respect and access them in all different areas of our learning environment. Books and stories are used to ignite

At Little Stoke, we understand the importance and impact of developing a love of reading from a young age. For that reason, reading, listening to and retelling stories is at the heart of our literacy learning. Children hear a wide range of stories and nursery rhymes that inform their development of narrative. They listen to stories and then use them to facilitate their play through re-enacting what they have heard

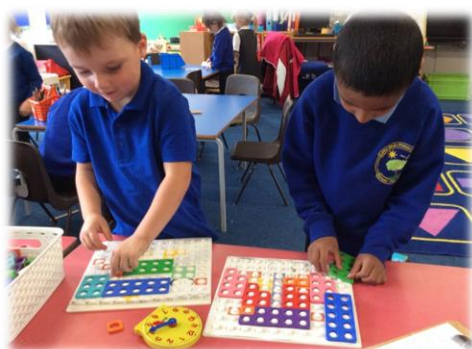




imagination and to find out about the world in which we live. We ensure a strong start in Early Years through daily phonics sessions in which they play games, learn to link sounds to letters, and begin their journey in learning to read. We use Unlocking Letters and Sounds throughout the whole school which ensures consistency. To ensure no child is left behind at any point in the progression, children are regularly assessed and supported to keep up through bespoke 1-1 interventions.

The children are offered many opportunities to write. They learn to write through a balance of adult-led and child initiated activities. Adults seize every opportunity to ignite children's interest to write throughout all areas of the learning environment.

### **Mathematics**



Children are taught maths in a balanced way that is both adult-led and child-initiated. In our setting, children start by exploring maths concepts in a concrete way using real-life situations and objects. Being able to touch, feel and manipulate the resources is an ideal way to help children develop an understanding of the underlying concepts. So that the children are able to do this, we provide them with a wide range of natural resources and toys that can be manipulated, counted and sorted. Adults in our setting are very skilled at bringing maths into children's natural play; probing, prompting and questioning children to build upon their maths learning.

### **Understanding the world**

At Little Stoke Primary School children are given opportunities to explore and observe the environment, living things and objects. We are guided by children's interests when they want to find out more or are curious about something. The adults in our environment use careful questioning to ensure children make the most of every learning opportunity. The children's learning is based on first-hand experiences to observe, predict, make decisions and discuss.



### **Expressive arts and design**



Children's curiosity and play is of the highest importance. Expressive arts and design gives us so many opportunities to value this. Children are able to explore and share their thinking, ideas and feelings in music, in art, movement and dance, role-play and technology. Children learn and are taught skills that they are able to apply in many contexts and situations, allowing them to then use these skills in their own creative way. Our children are

taught to value their own unique ideas and those of others' by celebrating what they have achieved.





### Planning:

Activities and experiences are planned for the children to enable them to learn and progress effectively. Planning is sequential and a curriculum map provides a yearly overview and ensures all areas of learning are covered. Learning opportunities are delivered through both self-chosen activities and adult directed sessions. Our planning is based upon themes which focuses on core texts. However, these are flexible and change depending on the interests of the cohort. Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

At Little Stoke Primary school, we use Unlocking Letters and Sounds to plan and deliver out phonic sessions. The White Rose framework and Number Sense scheme are used to support out maths planning.

### Teaching:

We believe that children learn through practical, hands on experiences and so provide a play based curriculum. However, there are times when the children engage in adult led activities. When the children are engaged in self-chosen activities the interaction between the adult and child is essential. The adult's roles is to skilfully respond to the children's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through their interaction. Their job is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. However it is important to insure that it is purposeful interaction and not interfering.

There are set routines that we follow each day. There are designated times when the children come together to be taught and we focus on maths, literacy, phonics, stories and topic work. These times provide the opportunity for children to develop their ability to work as a group to listen, to take turns, to answer and concentrate. We understand the importance of developing a love of reading and so whole class story times happen every day. During these times children are exposed to a wide range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction, providing them with the opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary. Children in reception take books home every week, a sharing books for them to share with an adult and a reading book for them to read themselves. These reading books are changed twice a week and are carefully chosen to match their phonic skills.

### Assessment

At Little Stoke Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Adults observe the pupils in both play and during adult led sessions to identify their level of achievement and understanding. These observations are then used to inform planning and to identify if additional support is needed. Observations are recorded and shared with parents through an online learning diary. At the end of the EYFS (end of Reception), teachers complete the EYFS profile (Statutory requirement) for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are; 'Expected' - meeting expected levels of development or 'Emerging'- not yet reaching the expected levels of development. Throughout the year, children are tracked to see if they are making progress and whether they are working at age related expectations in all areas of learning.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception staff are required to administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

### Partnership with parents.

We strongly believe that a positive partnership between school and home has a positive impact on the children. We begin to build these partnerships before the children start at Little Stoke Primary School by holding parent information sessions, teddy bear picnics and conducting home visits in the first week of term 1.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's learning through the online learning diary. There is also the opportunity for parents to share learning / achievements from home on the learning diary too. Termly topic webs are also shared with parents. Formal parent evenings are held two times a year, the first being in the autumn term to discuss how the child has settled and then again in the spring term to discuss progress and achievements. However, parents are encouraged to contact teachers if they want to discuss anything in the meantime. Teachers will also arrange meetings with parents if needed. We offer workshops for parents to attend detailing ways in which they can support their child's learning at home. Parent events are also planned in during the year for parents to spend time with the children completing an activity and supporting them in their learning. In the summer term parents receive a written report to summarise the child's achievements against the ELGs.

### Safeguarding

It is essential that children feel and are safe in school. Children learn best when they feel safe and secure, are healthy, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with adults in the school. We teach the children the importance of rules and boundaries and that these are in place to keep them safe and happy. We encourage them to become responsible for their own behaviour by supporting them to make the right choices. We aim to protect the physical and mental well-being of all children. Further information on this can be found in our school's Safeguarding and Behaviour Policy.

### Impact

We recognise that every child is unique and that they develop and learn in different ways and at varying rates. We want all of our children to develop a positive attitude to learning and therefore we strive for our children to become curious, resilient and self-assured in order to prepare them for the next stage of education, laying secure foundations for future learning and development.