

EYFS Curriculum



Teaching & Learning Guide



**CASTLEWARD
SPENCER ACADEMY**

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Introduction

This document outlines the provision that Castleward Spencer Academy offers to all its pupils aged between 3-5 years. Children within this age range are taught within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The EYFS has its own framework and is treated as a separate Key Stage. Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) refers to 3 and 4 year olds and Foundation Stage 2 (FS2) refers to 4 and 5 year olds. Early childhood education is valued in itself and should not be seen merely as a preparation for the next stage in learning.

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

We believe that children in our Foundation Stage are entitled to learning experiences which are enjoyable and memorable. We aim to give each child the best start during their time in the EYFS, to enable them to meet their full potential. We will do this by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Teaching children to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting a culture that learns through mistakes.
- Providing learning experiences which reflect the children's interests and motivations, while meeting the needs of their different learning styles.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and safe.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions differ to their own.
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective quality learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.
- Understanding that development in the Prime Areas of Learning (Communication & Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development) are at the heart of our curriculum and daily practice. The EYFS curriculum at CWSA has been designed to give children the best possible foundations for learning. It considers the socio-economic background of our families, and the typical developmental stages of our children on entry to EYFS. Castleward Spencer sits in a high area of deprivation.

The school has created "curriculum drivers" to address the typical gaps. In EYFS we have also adopted these whole school threads:

Castleward Spencer Academy Curriculum



Reading

We firmly believe that if children can read well and read widely, they will be best placed to achieve in all areas of the curriculum. By the time pupils leave Castleward, they will be able to read with accuracy and fluency, to analyse what they have read and developed an enjoyment of reading for pleasure.

Knowledge

Knowledge is like glue that sticks information as well as learning together. When we have prior knowledge about a topic, we understand it better. Topics are personalised to meet the needs of the pupils who attend the school, ensuring that they have opportunities to apply prior knowledge to new learning experiences and developing reasoning and problem solving skills.

Communication

Pupils learn to articulate their ideas, feelings and understanding of new vocabulary in order to engage with others through spoken language. They become effective speakers and listeners empowering them to better understand themselves, each other and the world around them. Being able to effectively communicate allows pupils to develop and deepen their subject knowledge and understanding through talk in the classroom, which has been planned, designed, modelled, scaffolded and structured to enable them to learn the skills needed to communicate effectively.

GROW

Our GROW values will be at the centre of everything we do so the children develop:

Great communication skills

Resilient, confident learners ready to take risks

Opportunity to be curious and independent

Working together with kindness to enjoy and achieve

See our *GROW* Curriculum Statement for more details.

Curriculum Overview

Our EYFS curriculum is carefully sequenced to enable the development of essential skills such as **listening, speaking, persistence, collaboration and self-regulation**.

These skills are each accompanied by a **child friendly toolkit**. These toolkits are aligned to the EYFS objectives and prepare children for the toolkits in KS1 and beyond.

In addition, our curriculum:

- Allows children to progress towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of FS2.
- Enables children to develop Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- Recognises the importance of emotional well-being.

The three **prime areas** of learning in our EYFS curriculum are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

These areas are a fundamental part of our EYFS curriculum at Castleward Spencer. They underpin and support learning in all other areas of the curriculum.

The **specific areas** of our EYFS curriculum provide our children with the essential skills and knowledge they will need to enter KS1. They grow out of the prime areas and provide important contexts for learning.

The specific areas of learning are:

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

EYFS Key Concepts - Understanding the World & Expressive Arts and Design

Our EYFS **Project Progression Document** breaks down the knowledge & skills pupils learn through the 'Understanding the World' objectives. This is useful in showing our 'readiness' for KS1 at the end of the EYFS journey.

In addition, during the EYFS we begin to introduce children to key concepts. These key concepts then progress throughout the school and are used in each subject to support pupils to fit new knowledge into existing schema. The concepts are included in the Medium Term Planning and are used by teachers to make links to prior knowledge and to link learning to wider concepts.

Teaching & Learning In EYFS

At Castleward Spencer, we favour a balanced approach to teaching and learning which:

- Is a mix of adult led, discrete teaching sessions and child led learning.
- Values indoor and outdoor play.
- Considers children's current needs, schemas and interests.
- Allows children to explore, create, investigate, rehearse, repeat and discover.
- Gives children independent access to a range of resources and activities.

In EYFS we have Teaching and Learning Guides for Writing, Maths and Phonics. Each guide sets out how the subject should be planned, taught and assessed. We have LTP curriculum plans to plan a new projects each half-term. These medium-term plans set out any discrete teaching of both the **prime areas**, and the **specific areas** of 'Understanding the World' and 'Expressive Arts and Design'. The statutory EYFS Framework and the Development Matters document provide the basis for these guides and for all of our planning.

Planning

Teachers and Teaching Assistants consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and will use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child. When working with the youngest children, and as part of

our introduction to school, teachers focus strongly on children's development in the prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other specific areas.

The EYFS Profile and Development Matters provide the long term plans which ensure a good coverage of the skills needed to achieve the Early Learning Goals and make progress towards them. These objectives are then used to create personalised plans for both Nursery and FS", see LTP. The medium term plan is mapped out over the half term to ensure that children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them a range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress. It also takes into account the children's learning and development needs. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning. Weekly plans are progressive, consider the children's interests and also address any identified needs for maximum progress. Plans ensure there is good coverage of the areas of learning while focusing on children's interests and key skills needed to achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of FS2. Planning includes a variety of whole class, group and individual activities, which are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum.

There is a separate half termly continuous provision plan that focuses on each area of learning in provision, including the outdoors, which develop the areas of learning and maintain the equal importance of all EYFS areas. Child Initiated Activities (CIA) are planned to take place as part of every session. Practitioners use CIA to carefully support children's knowledge and understanding and assess children through observation

Rosenshine's Principles

As throughout the rest of the school, our discrete teaching is based on ***Rosenshine's Principles*** (as explained in Tom Sherrington's book). The principles are summarised by Sherrington into 10 principles.

<p>01 DAILY REVIEW</p>  <p>MO TU WE TH FR</p> <p>Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity.</p>	<p>02 NEW MATERIAL IN SMALL STEPS</p>  <p>Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. Avoid its overload — present new material in small steps and proceed only when first steps are mastered.</p>
<p>03 ASK QUESTIONS</p>  <p>The most successful teachers spend more than half the class time lecturing, demonstrating and asking questions. Questions allow the teacher to determine how well the material is learned.</p>	<p>04 PROVIDE MODELS</p>  <p>Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modelling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.</p>
<p>05 GUIDE STUDENT PRACTICE</p>  <p>Students need additional time to rephrase, elaborate and summarise new material in order to store it in their long-term memory. More successful teachers built in more time for this.</p>	<p>06 CHECK STUDENT UNDERSTANDING</p>  <p>Less successful teachers merely ask "Are there any questions?" No questions are taken to mean no problems. False. By contrast, more successful teachers check on all students.</p>
<p>07 OBTAIN HIGH SUCCESS RATE</p>  <p>A success rate of around 80% has been found to be optimal, showing students are learning and also being challenged. Better teachers taught in small steps followed by practice.</p>	<p>08 SCAFFOLDS FOR DIFFICULT TASKS</p>  <p>Scaffolds are temporary supports to assist learning. They can include modelling, teacher thinking aloud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.</p>
<p>09 INDEPENDENT PRACTICE</p>  <p>Independent practice produces 'overlearning' — a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of students' working memory.</p>	<p>10 WEEKLY & MONTHLY REVIEW</p>  <p>WEEK 1 WEEK 2 WEEK 3 WEEK 4 WEEK 5 WEEK 6 WEEK 7 WEEK 8</p> <p>The effort involved in recalling recently-learned material embeds it in long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.</p>

The Environment

At Castleward Spencer, we believe that children are influenced by everything that is around them and so the environment itself acts as a 'teacher'. Our EYFS learning environment is rich, varied and 'enabling'. It has been developed in line with *Early Excellence* guidance to encourage exploratory, play-based learning and challenge. Our outdoor environment follows the same principles and is accessible to all children, in all weathers. Our outdoor resources are often on a larger scale than those indoors, as this helps to develop gross motor skills and

collaboration. Both of our indoor and outdoor environments have been organised to allow children to access all resources independently. This allows for freedom of choice through 'continuous provision'. Additionally, we enhance our provision with resources and equipment which support our discrete teaching sessions and the progressive needs of each child. For example, in the discovery area, we often have a range of seasonal items which relate to our current project. In the writing area, we provide resources which support our current T4W text and enable children to apply skills they have learned in a discrete teaching session.

We also enhance our provision according to the particular interests of our children.

Assessment

Specific assessment arrangements are detailed in our Teaching and Learning Guides. Additionally, each child is assessed on arrival at Castleward Spencer, using the statutory Baseline Testing materials (from September 2021). We then continue to observe each child and collect evidence of their learning on a regular basis. These observations are recorded using 2Simple software. Our assessments and observations help us to understand the individual needs of each child, inform our future planning and provide targeted support as required.

Admission Arrangements

Children enter Foundation Stage 1 the term after their third birthday, subject to availability. Children enter the Foundation Stage 2 classes in September of the school year in which they are five. Places in Foundation Stage 1 are offered in accordance with the academies admissions policy and Foundation Stage 2 classes are offered in accordance with Derby City Council admissions policy.

Before starting at Castleward Spencer Academy, all children and families are offered a home visit and a visit to the school for a 'come and join in' session. The purpose of these sessions is to get to know the children better and also for the children to become more comfortable in the school setting and get to know the practitioners better. We build strong and effective relationships with our parents and this helps children make the rapid progress needed in our academy from entry baselines.

Before starting Reception class, in the September of the academic year they turn five, the children undertake a comprehensive induction if they have not been to school nursery. In the Summer term, visits are made by school colleagues to the children's previous settings to meet the child and to develop the practitioner's knowledge and understanding of the children and their strengths and interests. The children are invited to visit the academy where they

get to see their new classroom and meet their new teacher/s. Parents and carers are invited to a transition meeting where they are able to meet colleagues, find out more information about starting full time school and are given the Admission Form and other important paperwork. For the children who have been in Castleward Spencer Nursery the induction process is slightly different. Regular visits are made to the Nursery by the Reception teachers and other practitioners. The children also have regular opportunities to visit the Reception classrooms. However, parents and carers have the same Transition Meeting.

At the end of the foundation stage the children also undertake a thorough transition to Year One. There are regular visits to the Year One classrooms and the Year One teachers visit the Reception classes. While completing the Early Years Profile the Reception and Year One teachers work together to moderate the judgements and to develop the Year One teacher's knowledge and understanding of the children. Children are prepared for entry to Y1 and colleagues are aware of the expectations of children in KS1. They provide a good foundation on which the children can build successfully in subsequent years. Children leave EYFS with rapidly improved language skills, confidence and social skills. The phonic knowledge of the majority of the children will have been secured and children will tackle early reading with greater fluency and confidence.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Castleward Spencer Academy are treated fairly whatever their race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our academy we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;

- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

If, as part of our ongoing assessment process, a child is identified as having a difficulty or not making their expected progress this will be discussed with parents and a Cause for Concern will be passed to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Parents will be fully involved in the process and there will be conversations with them about their views. The SEND process will be followed with support from the SENCO. Other agencies will be involved and worked with as appropriate. Some children may have a higher level of need which means they will progress to an IEP/ EHCP depending on the level of need.

Safeguarding

The academy takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. We have a dedicated safeguarding officer. All concerns for a child's safety and well-being are dealt with in line with policy and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy will be informed. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in the academy for parents to read.

Pupil Premium

Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) is additional funding for Early Years settings to support the education of disadvantaged 3 and 4 year olds including those adopted from care and Pupil Premium is for children in Reception class. The 'Pupil Premium' grant is funding provided to help schools support specific groups of children who may be in danger of making less progress than others. Its aim is to 'close the gap' between how well children from low-income and other disadvantaged families do compared to their peers. How much pupil premium funding a school receives is determined by the number of children:

- Eligible for free school meals (FSM)
- Parents who serve in the armed forces
- In local authority care.

Character Education

As throughout the rest of the school, we incorporate British Values into our EYFS curriculum, which is evidenced in our planning.

Positive Relationships

At Castleward Spencer Academy we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise the importance of working alongside parents and other significant adults. We do this through:

- An induction meeting for parents and carers before children begin in FS2.
- Including parents in the settling in process once their child begins in FS1 or FS2.
- Regular 'open door' sessions, which enable parents to participate in learning activities with their child.
- Regular two-way information sharing, which allows parents to understand their child's learning journey and to voice any concerns or access support if needed.
- The use of technology to share our approach to learning in key areas such as phonics.