

Understanding the world – information for parents



Dear parents,

The educational programme in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework states:

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

You will notice a lot of focus on reading and learning new vocabulary in this recently revised educational programme. Understanding the world starts with children developing a sense of self through personal experiences. We tell stories about them and take them on outings to learn about the world around them.

As they get bigger the children take an interest in the world around them – they learn about the natural world – animals, sea creatures, plants, birds etc and they join in with our rich and diverse curriculum which includes teaching them about festivals and celebrations and taking them on outings and visits.

In our setting, we use themes or topics to teach children about the world around them. Our topics are based on nature and follow the seasons, so children learn about spring, summer, autumn, winter, sensory explorations and the weather through the year. The more they learn, the more they want to engage – and as we know, when they are engaged and motivated, they are thinking and constantly learning new skills which they can build on in the future.

Weaving throughout all of this are books – fiction and non-fiction and stories on the computer. We answer questions, look things up, introduce new words from the books we read when we plan a new topic and develop your child's vocabulary, so they are constantly increasing their word bank.

If you have any questions about how we support your child's understanding the world learning or you have concerns about your child's progress, please ask. Thank you.