



Early Years, Year 1

Literacy



What does Literacy look like in Early Years at Castle School?

Intention

Our curriculum is based around story books, non-fiction books, rhymes, poems, phonics and reading/emergent literacy. We encourage children to have a love of reading by having books available for children to go and seek, we focus on five core rhymes across the school year so children have familiarity of known rhymes, enjoy singing and listening and joining in with words and actions. Sometimes children share stories in a small group, but they also have the opportunity to share stories on an individual basis.

Literacy in the EYs, Year 1 supports children with comprehension, word reading and writing. We provide early literacy through children noticing how we see marks, signs and symbols in the environment. We use topic-based learning to focus on areas and support children in their own level of learning. We share many reading opportunities, through daily stories, role-play and use of imagination. Adults play alongside the children commenting and modelling extended learning opportunities. We ensure activities are appropriate and meaningful for the child as the majority of the EYs cohort require a highly sensory approach. Sensory stories, thinking about use of voice, gestures and facial expressions support understanding.

Early reading skills include matching, rhyming, awareness of letters and sounds and the skills associated with language development. Early writing develops from providing children with activities whereby they can experiment with writing through sensory and physical exploration, both inside and outside as well as having opportunities for roleplay. Therefore, supporting and scaffolding individual children's writing as opportunities arise.

The school follows Essential Letters and Sounds phonics scheme to teach reading and the Launchpad to Literacy approach is used across the school.

Skills, knowledge and core vocabulary will be differentiated according to need. We work in conjunction with Speech & Language therapists and pupils have individual programmes which are integrated throughout the week with target outcomes being taught discreetly on a 1:1 basis. Pupils have opportunities to learn early reading and writing skills through sensory and physical experiences.

Children's learning either- pre-reading/reading skills- is mapped across the Launchpad to Literacy planning and assessment tool. Some pupils have splinter skills in reading (hyperlexia) and as such they can decode but not with sufficient meaning to comprehend what they are decoding. (ASD cohort). Staff are skilled at assessing and developing programmes to support emergent literacy including comprehension. Pupils are able to access learning, commensurate to ability and levels of progress, using the Cherry Garden model.

Implementation – Click on learning map to see implementation

Impact

We set and measure target progress, for all pupils with regard to literacy development, whether this be pre-requisite skills or the utilisation of a phonics approach. Each child is assessed and a pathway determined using Cherry Garden, Launchpad to Literacy and Essential Letters and Sounds. Skills and knowledge are recorded and any pupil at risk of not achieving in line with baseline recommendations receives interventions structured to boost literacy learning further.

We acknowledge the importance of literacy development in terms of our children's future and as a consequence we ensure a breadth in learning. The love of reading is developed through the exposure to books and stories. Children who can decode will follow a scheme to ensure they optimise ability. Literacy learning is tracked using Cherry Garden, Launchpad to Literacy and Essential Letters and Sounds.

The Cherry Garden system of assessment provides Castle with a child centred, flexible approach to assessing children with learning differences, which is proven to enhance parental engagement. We ensure all children make measurable progress which we build upon across the school year. Those children at risk of not achieving targets access highly structured interventions to boost learning potential.

Our approach:

- Provides teachers/support staff with key milestones in typically developing young children, we use this information to establish developmental stages of the children we work with in order to plan highly structured steps to learning. As such, we establish a child's developmental stage in order to plan a progressive and sequential approach to learning from their starting points. We measure progress and provide updates on achievement in line with the whole school's approach. Every child makes progress and for those with 'splinter skills' in areas of learning, usually linked to autistic strengths and motivations, we measure progress using the EYFS framework as well as Cherry Garden.
- Demonstrates not only linear but also lateral progress – this is highly supportive of children with complex needs. 100% of learners within EYS, Y1 have complex needs associated with their diagnosis of SEND. As a result, it is important to provide a broad and balanced curriculum offer commensurate to ability. If a child makes linear progress by generalising taught skills in functional situations this is an achievement we celebrate. This is linked to the whole school curriculum approach 'spiralised learning model'.

- Enables parents to explore and understand their child's learning through the unique Cherry Orchard approach. We value parental partnerships which are invaluable in achieving success for our learners. The impact of our work is shared with parents who are involved in joint target setting activities in school.